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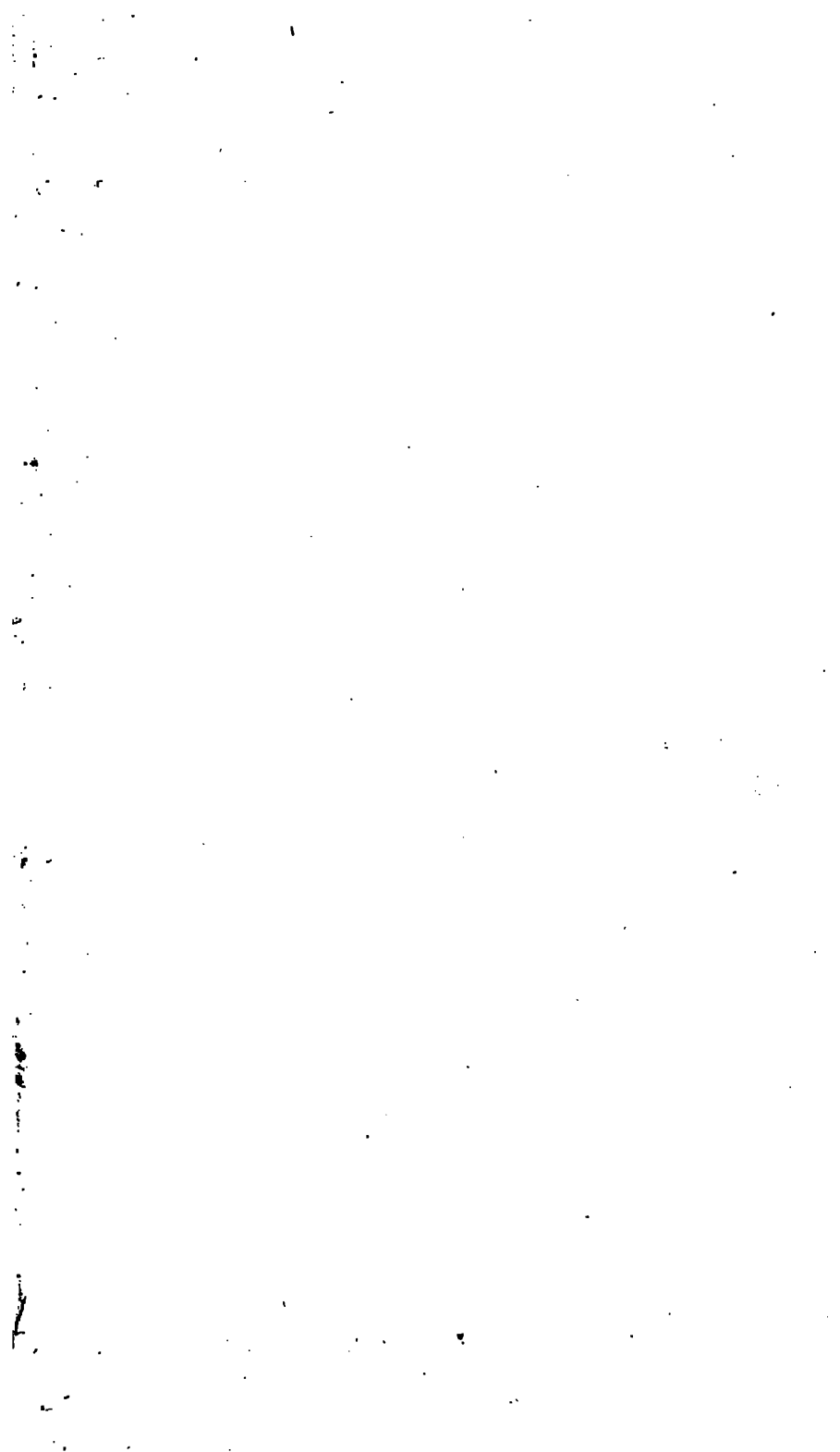
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AN ENQUIRY

INTO

THE GROUNDS

ON WHICH

THE PROPHETIC PERIOD

OF

Daniel and St. John,

HAS BEEN

SUPPOSED TO CONSIST OF 1260 YEARS.

BY

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THE design of the following pages, is to promote an investigation of the grounds upon which most protestant commentators have been led to consider the prophetic period mentioned by Daniel and St. John, as consisting of 1260 years ; and I wish at the outset to inform the reader, that I am not about to propose any new mode of interpreting the prophecies, or any speculations about their fulfilment. My enquiry is simply, whether a certain doctrine, which is very commonly entertained, is well founded. I am aware that this will lead to a prejudice in the minds of some, because I have found many persons speaking and writing, as if, in some cases at least, it were better to hold a mistaken opinion, than none at all. With such I know not how to argue, because it seems to me, that the removal of error, where it exists, must be the first step towards the establishment of truth ; and I had rather on any subject know nothing, than believe what is wrong. Whether I am

opposing an error, it is not my province to decide, but fully believing that I am, I feel it a duty to promote investigation of the grounds on which it has been taken up. If I am wrong, and the doctrine which I oppose is well founded, such an enquiry will undoubtedly lead to its further confirmation, and it will not continue to rest on evidence which others, as well as myself, have found unsatisfactory.

After much consideration, I feel convinced that, "*the time, times, and dividing of time*;" Dan. vii. 25: "*Time, times and a half*;" Dan. xii. 7: "*Time, times, and half a time*;" Rev. xii. 14: "*Forty and two months*;" Rev. xi. 2—xiii. 5: "*The thousand two hundred and threescore days*;" Rev. xi. 3: denote a period of 1260 *natural days*.

I believe it to be a rule of sound criticism, that we should take the literal sense of every writer, unless sufficient reasons can be given for departing from it. Whether those generally assigned for the mystical interpretation of the passages just cited, are satisfactory, I proceed to enquire.

In order to put the reader in full possession of the subject, I shall subjoin them as they stand at the beginning of Mr. Faber's Dissertation on the 1260 years, because I believe that work is generally known and respected, and contains all the arguments which I recollect to

have seen produced in favour of the mystical interpretation by any writer. He says,

“That *the 1260 days* are not mere *literal days*, but that they are *years*, is alike manifest from the usage both of Daniel and St. John themselves, from finding ourselves expressly warranted by scripture to interpret *a prophetic day* by *a year*, from the impossibility of all the circumstances ascribed to the period of *the 1260 days* taking place within the short compass of *1260 literal days*, and from the specification of the period *about which the 1260 days* must have commenced.

“I. We may venture to assume, that the same mode of computation, which is used by an author in one passage of his writings, will be used by him in all other passages; at least in those, which are marked by the common feature of treating, not of the fate of individuals, but of the fortune of communities. Hence, if any of the numerical prophecies of Daniel and St. John be *already accomplished*, we shall thereby have a clue for ascertaining the proper method of computing the numbers mentioned in their other numerical prophecies.

“Now we find that Daniel’s famous prophecy of *the 70 weeks*, whatever particular difficulties there may be in the explanation of it, has been proved, by the event of our Lord’s advent and death, to speak, not of

“ *weeks of days*, but of *weeks of years*: and we
 “ likewise find from the event, that *the apoca-*
 “ *lyptic ten days’ persecution of the church of*
 “ *Smyrna*, (Rev. ii. 10) means *the ten years’*
 “ *persecution carried on by Diocletian*.

“ It seems, therefore, only natural to con-
 “ clude, that *the three times, or years and a half;*
 “ *the 42 months, the 1260 days, the 2300 days,*
 “ *the 1290 days, the 1335 days, the three days and*
 “ *a half, and the five months*, of these two pro-
 “ phets are to be computed in the same manner
 “ *each day in each number being estimated as*
 “ *a year*.”

Certainly nothing can be more reasonable than to assume, that the same mode of computation which is used by an author in one passage of his writings, will be used by him in all other passages; but why is it added, “ at least in those which are marked by the common feature of treating not of the fate of individuals, but of the fortune of communities?” Is it customary with writers when speaking of *individuals*, to adopt a mode of computation different from that which they use when speaking of *communities*? Can any writer be adduced, whose practice gives colour to this limitation? Who ever heard of such a thing, and what should lead us to think of making such a distinction in the present case? Without it, indeed, it would

have been impossible to bring forward the only passage in Daniel which appears to favour the argument, or to set aside another which seems to me directly to oppose it.

The former of these passages is that respecting "the 70 weeks," which I do not deny to have been proved by the event, to be "weeks of years." To be sure the proposition itself, taken strictly, would exclude this case; for the period in question, though it stands in the scripture in terms of *days*, *months*, and *years*, is not calculated by *weeks*. Waiving, however, this consideration, the argument obviously rests on the assumption, that the "seventy sevens" spoken of by Daniel, would plainly and unequivocally signify "sevens of *days*," if taken literally. Yet it seems to me that we cannot properly assume this; and I have considerable doubt whether any person, ignorant of the fulfilment of the prophecy, and conversant with the Hebrew Bible only, would take it for granted, that the prophet was speaking of weeks (or more properly "sevens") of *days*.

On this point I think that christian writers have made a concession to infidels, which the Jews themselves do not ask, and which truth does not require. The Jews, however blind they may be to the fulfilment of this prediction, have never been wholly unacquainted with the language of the prophet, and the mode of

computation and expression used by their own writers; and when these points are considered, perhaps the reader will agree with me, that there is no such absolute necessity for a mystical interpretation of the "seventy weeks," as he may have supposed to exist.

(1) We are, ourselves, accustomed not only to speak of "weeks" (meaning exclusively weeks of *days*,) but also to calculate time, *by weeks*. Every reader is familiar with this, and is accustomed to speak of "three weeks," "six weeks," &c. He would think it strange if any one, in speaking or writing should, without some special reason, designate such periods by "twenty-one days," "forty-two days," &c. In short we *commonly* reduce days to weeks, weeks to months, and months to years. Such, however, I believe, was not the custom of the writers of the Scripture. The period of the Feast of Weeks, was, indeed, fixed by counting seven weeks from a given time; but beside this, I know of *only one* place in the scriptures,* where a period is described, as consisting of any number of weeks. This occurs Dan. x. 2, 3, where he states that he was sick during three weeks. In all other places, I think the reader will find

* Unless Lev. xii. 5, which will be spoken of presently, be also considered as an exception.

periods of time expressed in terms of *days*, *months*, or *years*. And this even where the numbers of days are such, as we should most probably reduce into *weeks*. Though Daniel, in the passage just quoted, speaks of "three weeks," he expresses the same period in another place by "twenty-one days," עשרים אחד יום Daniel, x. 13. In I. Kings, viii. 65, we read that Solomon held a feast "seven days and seven days, even fourteen (or literally 'four, ten') days," שבעת ימים ושבעת ימים ארבעה עשר יום. Here we may observe, that the word *day* is thrice repeated, and that the numbers *seven*, *ten*, and *four*, are used four times, in order to express what we should call "two weeks," or a "fortnight." Again, in Gen. i. 3, we find a period of ten weeks expressed by "seventy days." Taking these circumstances into consideration, I submit that we should not naturally expect a Hebrew writer to express a period of 490 days by seventy weeks, and should consider it as somewhat singular, if we found that he had done so.

(2) As the Jews were not in the habit of calculating by weeks, so it was not their custom to express the period of seven days by *any one word*. I believe it may be laid down as a *general rule*, that the inspired writers did not use שבע, שבעה or שבוע, or *any other word*, to signify

a *week*, but that they expressed the period by *שבועת ימים*, "seven days."^b The passage already cited from the first book of Kings will shew

^b I say a *general* rule, because it may appear to some, that there are three exceptions to it; and though I do not feel that they have much weight, I set them down—(1) Lev. xii. 5. It is said that a woman, after the birth of a male child, shall be unclean "seven days," *שבועה ימים*, and after the birth of a female, *שבועים* "sevens," or as we translate, "two weeks." Whether this is any thing more than such an elliptical form of expression, as is common in all languages, when (as in this case) the context renders any mistake impossible, I do not determine. I have not found it elsewhere in the scriptures. (2) Wishing to bring forward every thing which others might produce against my statement, I add the "seven" *שבוע*, translated "week." Gen. xxix. 27, 28; though commentators are not agreed, whether it relates to the *days* of Leah's wedding feast, or the *years* of Jacob's servitude. I am not aware of any other particular exceptions, but there is (3) a general exception, when the feast of weeks is spoken of. This feast, which continued during *seven* days, fixed by counting *seven* times *seven* days, might naturally be called the feast of *sevens*; but I believe it is not mentioned by that name more than *eight* times in the scriptures. These are, I believe, all the passages which seem to form any exception to the rule, that whenever a period of *seven days* is meant in the scripture, the word "*days*" is *expressed*. In support of it, I might refer to nearly sixty passages which I have examined, but they may be so readily found, that it is needless. Cruden, in his English Concordance, (in the division "seven days," under the word "day,") has collected more references than most readers will have the patience to turn out in a Hebrew Bible, and quite enough to establish the rule.

how the word "day" is repeated; and, that from the book of Daniel, though it formed an exception to the last rule, falls under this, for, in speaking of his sickness, he expressly says, that it lasted during three "*sevens of days*." Such (except in the few places noticed below) I believe to be the invariable practice of the sacred writers. The word *days*, accompanying "seven" will be recollected, if it has not been remarked, by the reader; and perhaps he will agree with me, that in a passage where the word "sevens" stands by itself, it is by no means to be assumed, that *sevens of days* are meant, when every writer of the Scriptures, who has occasion to mention that period, expresses it in a different manner. Might not a Jew, before the fulfilment of the prophecy, have fairly argued, that if Daniel had meant "*sevens of days*," he would, in conformity with the custom of all the sacred writers, and in consistency with himself, have inserted the word "days?" That as he had not done so, it was at least probable, that he meant some other *sevens*?

(3) I not only believe that a Jew might fairly argue thus, but it seems to me likely that he would, because I find the Misnic writers using the very word which we translate "week," in Daniel's prophecy, to signify *the space between*

one sabbatical year and another. As far as I have observed, this period is uniformly expressed in the Mishna by שבע, placed simply—that is, as it stands in the book of Daniel, and without any addition to signify that years are meant. Thus, in one place,^c we read of taking a field for a “few years,” לשנים מועטות, where the reader will observe, that years are specified; but the next section speaks of taking it for “one seven,” שבע אחת. We find, too, the “remaining years of the seven” repeatedly expressed by שאר שני שבע.^d The tenth section of Baba Metzia, already cited, not only shews that the Jewish writers understood by שבע, a period of seven years, but that they used it particularly to express the period between one sabbatical year and another. The point there decided is the difference between taking a field for “one seven,” לשבע אחת, and for “seven years,” שבע שנים. In the former case the tenant, and in the latter the landlord, was to bear the loss of the sabbatical year; a rule as just and equitable, as it would be among us to decide, that he who hires a labourer for “a week” has a right to only six days’ labour, while he who bargains for “seven days” service, has a right to the full number.

I do not say that שבע is never used by these writers to signify a week of days, because I

^c Baba Metzia, c. ix. § 9, 10. ^d Sheviith, c. iv. § 7, 8, 9.

know it is sometimes to be found in that sense ; but, as far as I know, they most commonly use שבת, or שבועת ימים. Their use of the word, however, is the most striking when they have occasion to speak of *sevens of days*, and *sevens of years*, in the same sentence. When this happens, they express the week of days by שבת, and the week of years by שבוע. Thus in Nedarim, c. viii. § 1, the duration of vows is discussed when made in terms of "to-day," היום ; "this week," שבת זו ; "this month," חדש זה ; "this year," שנה זו ; "this seven," שבוע זה. The same series is repeated in the same section ; and, in Baba Metzia, c. ix. § 11, we read of a workman of a *week*, of a *month*, of a *year*, of a *seven* ; שכיר שבת, שכיר חדש, שכיר שנה, שכיר שבוע.

On these grounds, I think that a reader of Daniel, who had not heard the period, called "70 weeks," or been in any way prepossessed on the subject, would not necessarily suppose that the prophet spoke of "sevens" of *days*, and might very probably understand him to speak of "sevens" of *years*. I have entered into this matter the more fully, because I have not seen either of these points stated, though they seem to be of some importance, not only to my own argument, but towards illustrating the prophecy of the 70 weeks.*

* Since I put together these remarks, I have found the

For my own purpose, perhaps, it would have been sufficient to point out the “sevens of days” (Dan. x. 2, 3), for our enquiry is simply, whether Daniel does in his prophecy of

following brief, but confirmatory, note, in Grotius. “*Septuaginta Hebdomades. Annorum. Ita enim mos erat loquendi, et manet apud Thalmudicos. Ideo ubi de dierum, hebdomade agitur solet adjici dierum nomen. Ezek. xlv. 21; infra x. 2 and 3, in Hebræo.*” The very excellent and learned author of the history of the Jews, in the Universal History, says, “The generality of the Jews do agree with us, that those prophetic weeks are weeks of years, or of a day for a year, according to the prophetic style” (vol. x. p. 477). He gives no authority, and I suspect he would have had some difficulty in finding one, among the Jews, for calling such a calculation as a day for a year, “according to the prophetic style;” and I think the reader will have found better reasons for their agreeing with us that the *sevens* are sevens of years. “*Nec diffitentur Judæi. . . . Sic ergo Aben Ezra, ex R. Saadia אלה שבועים הם שנים hæ hebdomadæ sunt annorum id est Sabbathici.* Et probat 1. quia paulo post Daniel loquitur de Hebdomadibus Dierum quæ limitatio hic abest.”—*Leydekker de Repub. Hebr.* II. 389.

I will not dissemble, however, that, at one period, the Jews appear to have had a mystical interpretation of the “times” of Daniel, which they considered as centuries. Thus Justin Martyr, speaking of the reign of Antichrist, says to Trypho, *ὕμεις ἀγνοοῦντες πόσον χρόνον διακατεχειν μέλλει, ἄλλο η̑γείσθε. τον γαρ καιρον εκατον ετη ε̑η̑γεισθε λεγεσθαι.* p. 250, Edit. Colon. 1686. How they came by this interpretation, or what they did with it, I know not, for I have never seen the matter explained, or even noticed; but it shews that *they* did not interpret a day by a year.

the seventy weeks, so clearly express *weeks of days*, as that when we find the word “days” expressed in other places, we should feel ourselves warranted to translate it “years.” It seems to me, that in order to bear the weight thus laid upon them, the 70 weeks should have been expressly called “*weeks of days*.” Then, if the fulfilment had been delayed 490 years, we should have learned that a *day* was put for a *year*, and should have had some colour for interpreting it so in other places. I refer the question, however, to the reader, only reminding him that unless we admit, not only the most *obvious*, but the *necessary*, sense, of “sevens,” placed simply, to be “weeks of days,” the whole argument falls to the ground; for the mode of computation, used in the passage cited, gives no colour for understanding 1260 *days* to mean 1260 *years*.

But I have said, that without the distinction respecting individuals and communities, those who maintain this doctrine would be obliged, in fairness, to bring forward another passage from the book of Daniel, which appears to me to oppose their argument; it is this—in chap. iv. 16, 23, 25, 29, we read of “*seven times*,” during which Nebuchadnezzar was to be excluded from his kingdom. Here it is admitted, that “time” means a *year*, and therefore, we might naturally expect that the three *times* and

a half, in chap. vii. should mean three years and a half.

Surely "we may venture to assume, that the same mode of computation which is used by an author in one passage of his writings, will be used by him in all other passages." Yet, (without the slightest hint of any change of style in the author) we are to suppose Daniel using the same word, in chap. iv. to signify "one year," and in chap. vii. to signify 360 years, and this *merely* because, in one case, he speaks of an *individual*, and in the other, of a *community*.

I have endeavoured to shew, that the whole force of the argument rests upon the limitation of a very reasonable proposition, which, without such a limitation, would be decidedly opposed to the mode of interpretation which is maintained. It remains, therefore, for the reader to decide, whether there is any ground for such a limitation. None whatever is assigned, and to me, the assumption of it does not appear to be warranted.

Thus much relates to the prophecy of Daniel; but, it is added, "We likewise find from the event, that the apocalyptic ten days' persecution of the church of Smyrna, means the ten years' persecution carried on by Diocletian."

Who would not imagine that the fulfilment of this prediction, in Diocletian's persecution, was an undisputed truth? I have no doubt

that Mr. Faber fully believes it to refer to that period; but as long as it is a matter disputed by commentators, whether this passage has any reference whatever to Diocletian, and while, so far as I can find a decided majority of them seem either expressly to refer it to other events, or else to be in acknowledged uncertainty respecting its application, I do not see how it can give us much help in the question; and surely it is too much to lay it at the foundation of an interpretation, so far from the literal meaning of plain words, as that which it is brought forward to support.

I have looked into every expositor within my reach, and the following is the result: Bishop Newton and Dr. Hales agree with Mr. Faber in supposing that Diocletian's persecution is intended.¹ Dr. Adam Clarke¹ goes only

¹ See Bp. Newton on the place, and Dr. Hales's Analysis, vol. II. p. 1296. As I have professed to give the full result of my enquiry on this point, I will add that there is another expositor who maintains the same opinion. The reader may give what weight he pleases to his authority, when he learns that he adapts this persecution to the church of Smyrna, by stating that Polycarp was one of the Dioclesian martyrs. I feel that I do Mr. Faber no injustice by withholding the name of such a writer.

¹ Inverting Mr. Faber's reasoning, Dr. A. Clarke says, "*As the days in this book are what are commonly called prophetic days, each answering to a year, the ten years*" [query, *days*] "*of tribulation may denote ten-years of perse-*

so far as to state, that the ten days *may* mean ten years, and that such was the duration of Diocletian's persecution. No other commentator, that I have met with, appears at all to sanction any reference to Diocletian. Grotius² takes the words literally, and understands a period of ten natural days. L. Cappellus³ extends them to all the ten persecutions. Doddridge,⁴ Fleming, Scott,⁵ and Gauntlett,⁶ refer

cution; and this was precisely the duration of the persecution under Dioclesian, during which all the Asiatic churches were grievously afflicted. Others understand the expression as implying *frequency* and abundance, as it does in other parts of scripture. Some think the shortness of the affliction is here intended," &c.—*Comm. in l.*

² *Decem dies*, intellige proprie; est enim consolatio ex brevitatem temporis.—*Comm. in l.*

³ Quomodo Ægyptii Israelitas decies invito quasi Deo detinuerunt et afflixerunt, unde etiam decem plagis a Deo affecti sunt, sic Christiani ab Imp. Rom. decem persecutiones gravissimas passi sunt, quorum ultima omnium gravissima annos totos decem sæviit.—*Spicileg: in Apocal. ii. 10.*

⁴ Doddridge says, "Mr. Fleming (of the Resurrection, p. 129), with many others, thinks this refers to the persecution under Domitian, which continued about *ten years*; and was begun when John was banished into Patmos and saw those Revelations. But it may only signify a short and limited time."—*Fam. Exp. in l.*

⁵ "This may either mean ten years, which is recorded to have been the duration of Domitian's persecution, or a considerable, but limited, time."—*Comm. in l.*

⁶ "This may either mean ten years, which is recorded

it to the times of *Domitian*. Junius⁷ and Brightman⁸ to the persecution by *Trajan*. Henry⁹

to have been the duration of Domitian's persecution, or a very considerable time, the term *ten* being frequently used indefinitely for *many*."—*Exp. of Rev.* p. 26.

Mr. Gauntlett appears to have followed Mr. Scott—Mr. Scott in all probability followed Dr. Doddridge—perhaps, (but I have not the means of ascertaining) Dr. Doddridge followed Mr. Fleming, without enquiring on what authority the persecution of Domitian is said to have lasted *ten years*. It may be recorded somewhere, but certainly it is not in any history which I have met with; and, indeed, it is so notorious, that Domitian's persecution did not begin until quite the latter part of his reign (probably not until the very last year of it), and that it was put a stop to on his death, that it would be a waste of time to cite authorities on the subject. It is of little consequence to the present enquiry, to what persecution the prophecy was intended to apply; but it is important to shew, how the facts of history have been accommodated, and how error is perpetuated by those, who cannot for a moment be suspected of intending to deceive. Since the above note was written, I see that Mr. Irving speaks of "the ten years' persecution under Domitian, which is threatened upon the church of Smyrna, under the name of 'ten days' tribulation.'"—Vol. i. p. 179.

⁷ I have his Commentary only in the form of marginal notes, in a folio English Bible, printed in 1708. I there read, "It is altogether necessary, that this should be referred unto that persecution which was done by the authority of the Emperors Trajan," &c.

⁸ "As touching Smyrna, therefore, this persecution fell out in the time of Trajan."—*The Revelation illustrated in l.*

⁹ "It was not to be perpetual, but for a set time, and a short time."—*Comm. in l.*

seems to understand an indefinite short time ; Brown,¹⁰ an indefinite long time ; and Guyse,¹¹ upon the whole, inclines to think, that the period intended is *indefinite*, without venturing to decide, whether long or short.

I cannot say how many commentators agree with Mr. Faber ; but as I before stated, I have honestly searched every one within my reach ; and I confidently refer it to the reader to decide, what weight is to be given to an interpretation so disputed. Let him, however, remember, that the question is not, whether one persecution, or another, is referred to ; neither is it whether these apocalyptic *days*, may or may not, be *years* ; but, whether the apostle does so *clearly* and *certainly* use the word *day*, for a *definite period of a year*, in *this* passage, as to form a *sufficient*, though a *single* warrant, for our assuming that he has done so in other places.

Mr. Faber's second argument is as follows :

II. " In this mode of reckoning, we are

¹⁰ " Ten days of tribulation may either denote ten years, or many days."—*Self-interp. Bible in l.*

¹¹ After mentioning various opinions, Dr. Guyse says, " I incline, therefore, to think upon the whole, that *ten* is not here to be taken *literally* for that exact number either of days or years, but for an indefinite number of them."—*Comm. in l.*

It may be added, as somewhat singular, that among all the various opinions collected in Poole's Synopsis, the persecution of Diocletian is not mentioned.

“ supported by the express warrant of Scrip-
 “ ture—“ your children,” says Jehovah to the
 “ rebellious house of Israel, “ shall wander in
 “ the wilderness forty years, and bear your
 “ whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in
 “ the wilderness. After the number of the
 “ days in which ye searched the land, even
 “ forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear
 “ your iniquities, even forty years.” (Num. xiv.
 “ 33, 34.) In a similar manner God addresses
 “ the prophet Ezekiel: “ Lie thou also upon
 “ thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the
 “ house of Israel upon it, according to the num-
 “ ber of the days that thou shalt lie upon it,
 “ thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have
 “ laid upon thee the days^s of their iniquity,
 “ according to the number of the days 390
 “ days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the
 “ house of Israel. And when thou hast accom-
 “ plished them, lie again on thy right side, and
 “ thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of
 “ Judah 40 days: I have appointed thee each
 “ day for a year.” (Ez. iv. 4, 5, 6.)”

I am quite at a loss to understand how these

^s For “ days” read “ years.” Not doubting that this is an error of the press, or the pen, I should alter it without notice, but from the fear that some reader might turn to Mr. Faber’s work, and suspect me of unfair dealing.

passages, where the expression in each case is "a day for a year"—where, in fact, it is declared and explained, that a certain number of *natural days* were appointed to represent, or prefigure, the like number of *natural years*,—should be called, an "express warrant" for the mode of reckoning which translates the word יום *day* by the English word *year*. In Numbers, and in Ezekiel, the phrase is יום לשנה יום לשנה "a day for a year, a day for a year," a mode of expression which leaves no doubt of the writer's meaning, and which absolutely requires יום and שנה to be taken in their literal sense for *natural* days and years. It seems to me, that the phrase could only be considered, as affording an "express warrant" for the translations which it is brought forward to support, if יום לשנה, a "day for a year," had turned out to mean, when stripped of a mystical disguise, "one year for 360 years." That is to say, if the *days* during which the Israelites searched the land had been *natural years*, and the *years* which they were to wander, prophetic *years* as they are called, each consisting of 360 *natural years*;—or, that we learned from the Scripture, that in obedience to this divine command, the prophet lay forty *years* on his side, and did so to prefigure a period of forty "*times*," each consisting of 360 years, the analogy would be good, and the warrant express; but what

colour is here given to our interpreting יום or שנה, otherwise than literally?

Mr. Faber adds the following note :

“ I am perfectly aware that *a year* is sometimes used by the prophets in its *literal* sense, as in Isaiah, vii. 8, xxiii. 17 ; Jer. xxv. 11, 12, and even by Daniel himself, when predicting the punishment of the individual Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iv. 25): but this does not affect the question, whether we are not warranted by Scripture sometimes to understand *years* by *days*. The question is not, whether *days* are *always* used by the prophets in the sense of *years*, but whether they are not avowedly used so *sometimes*.”

I do not know whether I fully understand this note, for I am not aware that any one has ever suggested that “ a year ” is used otherwise than literally, by any prophet, or other writer, except in the single passage of Daniel relating to the three times and a half; and to suppose, that in the passages cited it is not to be taken in its literal sense, would (as I have already said) require us to translate it by 360 years. Natural days may typify or prefigure natural years: that which we express by יום *day*, may prefigure that which we express by שנה *year*: but that is very different from putting יום for שנה and seems to me to be no warrant for such a substitution.

To the best of my knowledge, there is no passage in the Scripture where "day," or "month," or "year," put simply, and without explanation, is "avowedly" used to denote (i. e. to *express* as a *name*, not to *prefigure* as a *type*) any period of time, except that which the word literally signifies; and I think the reader will agree with me, that until some such passages are adduced, we cannot confidently assert that we have the "express warrant of Scripture" for mystically interpreting the plain words of Daniel and St. John.^b

Mr. Faber's third argument is as follows:

III. "That the 1260 *days* must mean *years* is further evident from the nature of the circumstances ascribed to them. *The little horn* of Daniel's fourth beast is to acquire and exercise an unlimited dominion of some kind or other within the precincts of the Roman Empire, to wear out the *saints* of the Most High, and to change times and laws; *the apocalyptic ten-horned beast*, in his revived state, is to make war with *the saints* and over-

^b I am surprised that Amos, iv. 4, has not been quoted by any writer that I have seen, in support of the mystical interpretation of the 1260 days. While this is the case, there is no need to say any thing respecting it, and I only mention it, that I may not appear to suppress a passage, which, as far as I can see, is as much to the purpose as any one that is brought forward.

“ come them, and to obtain power over all
 “ kindreds and tongues and nations : *the apoca-
 “ lyptic two-horned beast*, the contemporary and
 “ coadjutor of *the ten-horned beast*, is to cause
 “ the earth and them that dwell therein to wor-
 “ ship *the first beast*, to set up an image for all
 “ men to worship, and to obtain such a degree
 “ of power as to be able to lay every person
 “ under an interdict who should refuse to com-
 “ ply with his terms of communion ; and the
 “ *apocalyptic harlot*, who rides *the ten-horned
 “ beast*, is to extend her influence over peoples
 “ and multitudes and nations and tongues, to
 “ commit fornication with the kings of the
 “ earth, to intoxicate the inhabitants of the
 “ earth with the wine of her fornication, and
 “ herself to become drunken with the blood of
 “ the saints and martyrs. Is it possible that
 “ all these things could be done in the short
 “ space of *three natural years and a half* ? This
 “ will appear perhaps yet more evidently, if
 “ we attend to the subdivisions of this period.
 “ Towards the close of *the 1260 days*, *the beast*
 “ is to slay *the witnesses* ; and their dead bodies
 “ are to lie unburied in the forum of the great
 “ city, *three days and a half*, after which they
 “ are to come to life again. In the course of
 “ these *three days and a half*, they that dwell
 “ upon the earth are to rejoice over them, and
 “ make merry, and send gifts one to another—

“surely the inhabitants of the earth could not
 “do all this in the very short space of only
 “*three natural days and a half*. So again, a
 “short time before the destruction of *the beast*,
 “and therefore when *the 1260 days* are drawing
 “near to their termination, three unclean spi-
 “rits go forth to gather together unto the battle
 “of the great day of God Almighty, the kings
 “of the earth, even of the whole Ecumenè, or
 “*Roman world*. They are accordingly gathered
 “together to *Armageddon*, where they are af-
 “terwards completely routed. Now, if all
 “this gathering together is to take place to-
 “wards the *close of the 1260 days*; it is plain
 “that we can allot to it no greater space than
 “that of *a few days*. But, if *mere natural days*
 “be intended, how can such a general gather-
 “ing together as this be effected in the course
 “of *a few days*. Since then we have the autho-
 “rity of Scripture for sometimes understanding
 “*a day* to mean *a year*; and since the reason
 “of the thing requires us so to understand *each*
 “*day of the 1260 days*, we are not only war-
 “ranted, but compelled, to consider *the 1260*
 “*days*, as *1260 years*.”

Before I say any thing of the circumstances
 here alluded to, and by which the prophecy
 has been, or is to be, fulfilled, I must state,
 that of all the predictions which it contains,

there is none more clear, perhaps I might even say, none, so clear, intelligible, and unequivocal, as the limitation of the time, during which the events predicted are to take place. The period is distinctly and repeatedly expressed in terms well known, and with respect to the literal meaning of which, we cannot have a moment's hesitation. It stands in Hebrew, and in Greek, under the different denominations of days, months, and years, and I beg the reader to consider, whether we have a right to depart from the literal sense of these words, unless we can produce some clear, unequivocal, precedent; some passages, in which these terms, or at least some, or one of them, has been clearly used to express a period different from that which is designated by it, in its literal sense. With this view I cannot but think, that we should be very confident of our interpretation of other parts of the prophecy, before we venture upon so bold a measure as to alter the plain words of Scripture. It is not, however, my intention here to enquire into the circumstances, by which the prophecy is to be fulfilled. I am content to take them as they stand in the foregoing abstract, which, for the sake of argument, I am willing to suppose perfectly correct; and I request the reader to consider, whether it is IMPOSSIBLE that they should take place in three years and a half.

Setting aside the plain declarations of Scripture as to the time to be employed, and the extraordinary *means* to be used, in the fulfilment of these predictions, surely what we have seen in the political convulsions of Europe, during the last thirty years, may enable us to believe it not *impossible* that a power should arise, and “acquire, and exercise, an unlimited dominion, of some kind or other, within the precincts of the Roman Empire,” and do all that we can *certainly understand* to be predicted of him, in the course of three years and a half. I confidently refer the case to the deliberate consideration of the reader.

I wish, however, to remark, more particularly, on the slaying of the witnesses, because that will probably appear to many, the strongest part of the argument. “Surely,” says Mr. Faber, “the inhabitants of the earth *could not do all this*, in the very short space of only three natural days and a half.” But, what is “ALL THIS” which it is supposed that the inhabitants of the earth cannot possibly do in three natural days and a half? When the witnesses have been slain, “they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them; and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another.” This is all that I find written respecting those “that dwell on the earth:” and let us take it in its utmost latitude, and suppose it to include all the inha-

bitants of the whole world. Would any unbiassed reader understand more by it, than that the inhabitants of the world should rejoice and make merry, as the spreading news should reach them? There is nothing, I think, in the common rules by which we understand what is written, to lead us even to surmise, that the writer of the Apocalypse meant us to understand that “they that dwell upon the earth” shall rejoice over the fall of the witnesses, *precisely* and *only* during the period in which they actually lie dead. Let us suppose a case, which may perhaps have sufficient analogy to explain my meaning. Let us imagine some English historian to have stated, that after a long war, “*all the subjects of Great Britain* rejoiced and made merry on the restoration of peace.” Would it be reasonable to argue, that the peace must have lasted until the British subjects in the East and West Indies were acquainted with the fact? If the peace lasted only a few days, it might be celebrated by the inhabitants of Calcutta long after the renewal of hostilities; yet this would not be considered as falsifying the statement of the historian, because no one would have supposed that his language implied any thing respecting the duration of the peace.

Should the reader turn to the 11th chapter of the Revelation, to look at the passage already mentioned, he will probably observe the

9th verse also; and therefore, although it is not mentioned in the argument, I will say a few words respecting it. It is there declared, that “they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies.” The original (ἐκ τῶν λαῶν) leads us to understand only individuals belonging to these different kindreds and nations;¹ and, if we consider that the witnesses are slain by the beast, to whom power is given “over all kindreds and tongues and nations,” (xiii. 7) we might naturally expect, that such spectators would be present.

As it regards the three unclean spirits,^k it does not appear necessary to say much. I think the reader will scarcely require (and, to speak frankly, I should hardly know how to set about) a serious refutation of an argument built upon the *length of time* which it *must* take “spirits of devils, working miracles,” to execute a commission which we cannot pretend fully to understand.

Looking, then, at the argument in general, I can only say, that I see no *impossibility* involved in the supposition, that the prophecy

¹ Dr. Hales, who supposes that a slaying of the witnesses will hereafter take place in London, says, “from her boundless commerce ‘*spectators*’ cannot be wanting ‘of peoples, and tribes, and languages, and nations,’ from the four quarters of the globe.”—*Analysis*, II. 1362.

^k Rev. xvi. 14.

may receive its accomplishment in three years and a half; and, that even if it *appeared* otherwise, I should be very unwilling to admit such a supposed impossibility, as a sufficient warrant for changing the usual import of common and well understood words.

I wish the reader seriously to consider, whether a departure from the plain meaning of words, on the ground that their literal fulfilment is *impossible*, is not highly dangerous. What is the character of the prophecies hitherto fulfilled? Let us take Bishop Hurd's remarks on our Lord's prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem. "Was it *likely* that Judæa, at that time a Roman province, should be thus desolated by its own masters? Was it to be *presumed*, that so small a province should dare to engage in a formal contest with Rome, the mistress of the world, as well as of Judæa? With Rome, then in the zenith of her power, and irresistible to all nations? Was it *conceivable*, if any future distraction of that mighty empire should tempt the Jews to oppose their feeble efforts to its high fortune, that a vengeance so signal, so complete, should be taken upon them? that nothing less than a total *extermination* should be proposed, and effected? The ruin of the temple at Jerusalem was to be so entire, that *one stone should not be left upon ano-*

ther. Allow for the exaggerated terms of a prophetic description; still, was it *imaginable* that the Romans should, in any proper sense of the words, execute this denunciation? Was it *their* way, as it was afterwards that of the Goths, to wage war with *stones*? Was it a principle with *them* to beat down the *pride* of buildings, as well as of *men*? Would even their policy or their pride, have suffered them to blot out an ancient, a renowned, an illustrious temple, the chief ornament of their province, the glory of the east, and the trophy of their own conquests?"¹

Yet we know that it was fulfilled—and, to advert to only one other prophecy. What is there in the whole writings of Daniel and St. John which equals in apparent impossibility the simple, brief, and unexplained prediction of Isaiah, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a child." Surely if these words, instead of standing (as thanks be to God they do) among those fulfilled prophecies, which form a support of christian faith and hope, were as yet unaccomplished, and only to be found in the Apocalypse, we should hear it asserted as confidently, (and I submit to every unbiassed reader of the prophecies, more plausibly,) that

¹ Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies, p. 167.

some mystical interpretation *must* be adopted, and would be fully warranted, by the *impossibility* of the event predicted.

I cannot help feeling the truth of what Waterland says, though I wish he had expressed it in milder terms, "Most of the abuses with regard to the interpreting of Scripture, when traced up to their fountain head, will appear to have been owing to this, that some will fancy the plain and obvious sense unreasonable or absurd, when it really is not; and will there-upon obtrude their own surmises, conjectures, and prejudices, upon the word of God."^m

Mr. Faber's fourth argument is as follows :

IV. "The point seems to be finally decided
 " by the specification of the period, *about which*
 " *the 1260 days* must commence. Since Da-
 " niel's *ten-horned beast* is allowedly *the Roman*
 " *Empire*, his *putting forth ten horns* must, both
 " agreeably to the analogy of prophecy, and
 " to the explanation of the interpreting angel
 " (compare Dan. viii. 8, and see vii. 24), denote
 " *the rising up of ten kingdoms within the limits*
 " *of that empire*. These ten kingdoms arose,
 " as it is well known, in *the fourth and fifth cen-*
 " *turies*, when the Roman empire was falling
 " asunder in consequence of the attacks of the
 " northern nations. Now *the gradual rise of a*

^m Quoted in Bishop Van Mildert's Bampton Lectures, p. 404.

“ *little horn*, into whose hand *the saints* are de-
 “ livered, during the space of *the three times and*
 “ *a half*, or *the 1260 days*, is represented as
 “ synchronizing with *the rise of the ten kingdoms*.
 “ Daniel does not expressly teach us, *how soon*
 “ after the rise of *the ten kingdoms the 1260 days*
 “ commence : but it is most natural to suppose,
 “ that they commence *not very long* after ; be-
 “ cause, since this is the period of *the horn's*
 “ tyranny, of his speaking great words, of his
 “ changing times and laws, and of his exercis-
 “ ing some peculiar kind of authority over the
 “ whole empire of *the beast*, if we suppose a
 “ very long intermediate time to elapse, we
 “ shall be obliged to suppose either *the quies-*
 “ *cence of the horn* during that intermediate time,
 “ or *the total silence of a professedly chronological*
 “ *prophet* respecting his actions during that
 “ whole time. St. John, however, appears to
 “ supply the omission of Daniel. He tells us,
 “ that *the ten kings* are to receive their power in
 “ *one hour* or *apocalyptic season* with *the beast*,^a

^a Mr. Faber appears to have changed his opinion after
 this was written. In his third volume, published several
 years after the first, he says, “ I was once erroneously led,
 by the ambiguity of our common English translation, to
 suppose the passage (Rev. xvii. 12) to mean, that the ten
 kings should receive power SYNCHRONICALLY WITH the
 Beast ; whereas its plain import is, that the ten kings should
 receive power SYNCHRONICALLY indeed with *each other*,

“ their number *ten* being completed in the course
 “ of that *season* during which *the Roman empire*
 “ was apostatizing into its former beastiality ;
 “ and that they should give their power and
 “ strength unto *the beast*. Now *the Roman em-*
 “ *pire*, as we shall hereafter see, continued gra-
 “ dually to relapse into idolatry in the course of
 “ the *fifth* and *sixth centuries*, until at length it
 “ completely revived, in its *beastial* capacity,
 “ or a second time became a *perfect living beast*,
 “ by giving *the saints* into the hand of *the little*
 “ *horn*, and by formally re-establishing under a
 “ new name its ancient demonolatry. Hence
 “ the times of *the revived beast*, in his capacity
 “ of a *beast*, and the times of *the little horn*, are
 “ said to be the same. (Dan. vii. 25 ; Rev. xiii.
 “ 5.) Since then *the beast* completely revived
 “ at the commencement of *the 1260 days*, since

but IN CONJUNCTION WITH *the beast*.” Vol. III. p. 255.

The reader will bear this in mind while he reads the rest of
 the argument, which seems to me to be answered by it.
 He should also be informed, that by the word “ hour” Mr.
 Faber understands either “ the twenty-fourth part of a day,
 or a *season of indeterminate length*.” See vol. II. p. 108.

Thus when it is said of the witnesses (Rev. xi. 12), “ they
 ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld
 them. And the SAME HOUR was there a great earthquake.”
 The first of these events is supposed to have occurred in
 1555, and the second is the French Revolution. If the
 word “ hour” is so indefinite, I do not see how it is to prove
 synchronism.

“ the kings (their number *ten* being completed)
 “ were to receive their power in the same apo-
 “ calyptic *season* with his previous gradual re-
 “ vival as a *beast*, and since they were to devote
 “ that power to him for the purpose of uphold-
 “ ing his bestial principles; it is plain, that *the*
 “ *beast* must have been reviving in *the same hour*,
 “ or *apocalyptic season*, with the ultimate divi-
 “ sion of *the Western empire* into ten kingdoms.
 “ But this *apocalyptic season* is that of *the fourth*
 “ *trumpet*; in the course of which the number
 “ of the ten kingdoms was completed, and dur-
 “ ing which *the beast* was gradually reviving by
 “ relapsing more and more into idolatry, until
 “ at length he resumed all his functions of bes-
 “ tial vitality at the first blast of *the fifth trum-*
 “ *pet.*” Thus it appears, since *the 1260 days*
 “ commenced when *the beast* was perfectly re-
 “ vived, and since he was gradually reviving in
 “ *the same apocalyptic season* with the completion
 “ of the number of the ten kingdoms, that they
 “ cannot have commenced very long after the
 “ subversion of *the Western Roman empire*. This
 “ being the case, though we may not be able
 “ quite *positively* to fix the *precise* era of their
 “ commencement, we may be absolutely sure

“ “ It will afterwards be shewn, that *the beast* perfectly
 revived in *the year 606*, and 607; that is to say, at the era
 when *the fourth trumpet* ceased, and when *the fifth trumpet*
 commenced.”—Note by Mr. Faber.

“ that they *must* have commenced *many ages ago*.
 “ But, if they be no more than 1260 *natural*
 “ *days*, then they must likewise have *expired*
 “ many ages ago. And, if they have expired
 “ many ages ago, then the events, which are
 “ represented as synchronizing with their ter-
 “ mination, must long since have taken place.
 “ But those events have *not yet* taken place :
 “ therefore *the 1260 days* cannot yet have ex-
 “ pired. We know, however, that *the 1260*
 “ *days* must long since have commenced. It
 “ follows therefore, that they cannot be *natural*
 “ *days* : and if they be not *natural days*, then
 “ they must be *prophetic days*, or *real years*.

Although I have thought it right to give the
 argument at full length, it will be, I think, un-
 necessary to notice all the statements which it
 contains. It is obviously founded (like the pre-
 ceding) on the assumption, that other prophecies
 are rightly explained.

But the reader will consider, that I am not
 contesting Mr. Faber's particular system, and
 it will be evident to him, that his argument rests
 simply on his interpretation of the prophecies,
 and that it assumes a number of points which
 have been denied by other equally respectable
 writers. It is not in my power to decide be-
 tween them, and it is not my purpose to attempt

it; what I aim at in these pages is to call the attention of pious and learned christians to the subject, and to excite enquiry into the Scriptures themselves, and into the principles and modes of interpretation which have been adopted by commentators, rather than to refute or maintain any system of my own.

With a view to this I would make one or two observations. In the first place, it is said that the rise of the little horn "is represented as synchronizing with the rise of the ten kingdoms." This Mr. Faber repeatedly asserts in his third volume. Speaking of the early fathers, he says, "they would be *quite sure*, from the unequivocal language both of Daniel and St. John, that the Roman empire was destined to be split into ten kingdoms, and that SYNCHRONICALLY with this its division a small kingdom was to arise."^p "The fathers (as we have just seen) rightly judged that the eleventh horn would SYNCHRONIZE with the ten primary horns."^q "Either Daniel was a false prophet because he foretold a circumstance which never came to pass; or a small kingdom, minutely corresponding in character with the little horn, *did* actually spring up SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten Gothic horns."^r I give these extracts

^p p. 240.

^q p. 241.

^r p. 242.

as they are printed in Mr. Faber's work, and the reader will observe that this synchronism is a point of great importance.

Now to any plain reader of Daniel, I think it would seem, that the rise of the little horn is not represented as synchronizing with the rise of the ten kingdoms, for the beast had the ten horns when he was first seen, and, for any thing that appears, might have had them for any period of time; but the prophet witnessed the actual rise of the little horn.

I believe no one disputes that the Roman empire was shewn to the prophet, not as it existed in his own day, or in any way that embraced the whole period of its duration, but as it would exist at some certain period in futurity. That period does not seem to me to be the period of division, but some period when the empire shall have been divided; or, in other words, some period *after* (and I cannot conceive whence we are to gather *how long after*) the beast has become ten-horned. I do not see, therefore, how those who maintain that "this monarchy still subsists in the toes or kingdoms into which it was broken,"* can deny that the eleventh horn may yet arise. It seems to me, that *any* period, shewing the Roman empire in a state of division into ten kingdoms, might be

* Scott's Comm. on Dan. ii. 10.

the period intended ; and, that even if it could be clearly and satisfactorily shewn, that the Roman empire has once been divided into ten kingdoms, yet we should not be thereby warranted in deciding, that the prophecy must have been *then* fulfilled, unless we could also prove that the empire *is not now*, and never can be *hereafter*, in that state of division.^t

I shall freely confess, however, that the account generally given of the division of the Roman empire is, to my own mind, very unsatisfactory.

In the first place, this argument assumes, that by THE ROMAN EMPIRE we are to under-

^t “ Though the number of kingdoms has varied from time to time, yet it has been remarked by Daubuz : ‘ As if the number ten had been fatal in the Roman dominions, it has been taken notice of on particular occasions ; as about 1240, by Eberhard, Bishop of Saltzburg, in the Diet at Ratisbon. At the time of the Reformation they were also ten.’* ‘ As the number of kingdoms,’ says Mr. Whiston, ‘ into which the Roman empire in Europe, agreeably to the ancient prophecies, was originally divided, A. D. 456, was exactly ten ; so is it also very nearly returned again to the same condition, and at present is divided into ten grand or principal kingdoms or states.† It is remarkable, that at the present period also‡ the number of regal governments within the limits of the Western Roman empire is exactly ten.”—*Cuninghame on the Apocalypse*, 2d edit. p. 161.

* Illustrations of Prophecy, p. 52.

† Ibid.

‡ Viz. the year 1817.

stand the Western Empire *only*. This would, perhaps, surprise an unprepared reader, who would probably (and, I think, not very unreasonably,) expect to find that the Roman empire, in the fourth and fifth centuries, included Constantinople. Bishop Newton, however, will tell him, that if he has a mind to have them, he "must look for the ten kings, or kingdoms, where only they can be found, amid the broken pieces of the Roman empire." And he afterwards^v recites, and adopts, Sir Isaac Newton's mode of excluding the Eastern part of the Roman empire, by a scheme which Mr. Faber asserts, "must be erroneous."^w On the other hand, Mede includes the Eastern Empire.^x And the author of an elaborate article in the *British Review* (a man whose talents and piety might have born a comparison with those of any writer on the subject) stated it as an "obvious fact, that the attempts to find ten kingdoms, in the Western empire only, have produced nearly as many opposite opinions as there have been writers on the subject. All their difficulties have arisen from a principle which they in common assumed; and their endless disagreement demonstrates its incompatibility with the luminous tenor of divine prophecy."^y Again, suppose we

^v Vol. I. p. 460.

^v *Ib.* p. 473.

^w Vol. II. p. 235.

^x *Works*, p. 661.

^y *British Review*, vol. XVIII. p. 405.

give up the Eastern empire, and look for the ten kingdoms "where only" (according to Bishop Newton) "they can be found;" what do we find? Mr. Faber, indeed, says, "*these* kingdoms arose, as it is well known;" but *what* kingdoms are they? Whom shall we take for our guide? Shall we accept the list given us by Bishop Newton? According to Mr. Faber, "he most unwarrantably sets aside the *real* list of these kingdoms, and substitutes a list of his own, into which he introduces the petty states of Rome, and the Greek province of Ravenna, evidently *for no other purpose* than to give a colour of probability to his *predetermined interpretation*." May we then assume that Mr. Faber's *real* list is undisputed? "It appears to me," says Mr. Frere, "that the only difference between Bishop Newton and Mr. Faber is, that Bishop Newton felt a stronger confidence that the three horns, which were plucked up before the papacy, were Ravenna, Lombardy, and Rome, than he did in the correctness of any of the proposed lists of the ten kingdoms; he therefore made his list of the ten horns *bend* to his interpretation of the three horns: Mr. Faber, on the other hand, it appears, felt the most confidence in the interpretation of the ten original horns, as being those that have been named in his list; he therefore *forcibly accommodates* the interpretation of the three horns; so as to agree

with his list of the ten kingdoms, and considering that the parts of the prophecy relating to the three horns are more particular and pointed than those relating to the ten horns, when spoken of altogether, (on which account we see, that though, Mr. Mede, Sir Isaac and Bishop Newton *differ in their lists of the ten kingdoms*, they agree as to the three that were plucked up) the course pursued by Bishop Newton appears to me *more justifiable*; and more likely to be attended with a successful result than that pursued by Mr. Faber. I wish, however, in no instance to digress from the subject immediately before me, much less to pass any censures upon an author whose labours I so much respect as I do those of Mr. Faber; and my only object in bringing forward high contending authorities, is to point out what may be considered as debatable ground, within the range of which any commentator is at liberty to attempt the establishment of a new hypothesis.*

The identity of these kingdoms is then still a disputed point. To say nothing of Grotius and Brightman, who differ from each other in every point except the exclusion of *all* the Gothic kingdoms, let the reader only look at the various lists which have been made by learned men, and I think he will have no doubt

* Combined View, 172.

that if the number mentioned by Daniel had been nine or eleven, the right number would have been found among those petty kingdoms, whose unsettled state renders it so easy to enumerate them variously. At all events, let him say, whether those ten kingdoms are so well known, and the synchronical rise of the little horn, and the other particulars mentioned *so certain*, as finally to decide that we must interpret very plain and common words, in a manner certainly very unusual, and, I believe, unprecedented.

It would obviously fill a volume were I to go through every point alluded to in this argument. I think it, however, unnecessary; because those who are sufficiently acquainted with Mr. Faber's works to understand the line of reasoning at all, will be aware how much its force depends upon his system. That system in particular it is not my object to disprove; and if I use the author's name more frequently than that of any other writer, it is, as I have already said, because he has written most upon the subject. While I am obliged to speak of various writers, and to refer to their works, it would deeply grieve me should one word of this pamphlet give offence to any christian, and especially to those who are engaged in that study, which appears to me the best and the noblest in which the human mind can be em-

ployed—the study of the word of God. I trust, however, that I have not written, and shall not write offensively, and I know that they who sincerely love truth will pardon some freedom in the search of it.

Having now taken some notice of the arguments, which I have seen produced, for departing from the literal sense in the passages referred to of Daniel and St. John, I submit them to the reader's deliberate judgment, and earnestly entreat his attention to another point which has greatly influenced my own mind.

WHATEVER difficulty there may be in understanding prophecy not yet fulfilled, I believe I only express the opinion of the christian world, in general, when I say, that we are warranted to hope that we may arrive at some tolerable understanding of those predictions which have long been accomplished.

Some of the soberest writers upon the subject go farther than this. Mr. Scott says, the prophecies of Scripture “constitute a grand system of *previous information* as to the designs of providence, extending from the earliest ages even to the consummation of all things; and accompanied by such distinct notations of order as may well be called the geography and chronology of prophecy; insomuch that *any one*, in

any age, who well understood the prophecies extant in his day, might have known what to expect at the specified times, and in the specified countries.^a Mr. Cooper argues, that as it is “obviously the duty and interest” of christians “to attend to such indications, so it must be presumed, that it is in their power to understand them.”^b But I do not ask so much as is here conceded; it is enough for my argument, that we may expect to understand *fulfilled* prophecy, and this, I believe, will be generally admitted. Bishop Horsley has said, “To attain the useful end of prophecy, which is to afford the highest proof of providence, it was necessary that prophecy should be delivered in such disguise as to be DARK while the event is remote, to CLEAR UP as it approaches, and to be rendered PERSPICUOUS by the accomplishment.”^c “Commentators in general allow,” (says Mr. Scott) “that this vial is not yet poured out: and this is a sufficient reason why a commentator should decline giving any conjecture in what manner so compendious, and so obscure a prediction will be fulfilled: *but when fulfilled it WILL CEASE TO BE OBSCURE.*” “Predictions which are yet future will in due course be so decidedly fulfilled, as to leave NO

^a Preface to Comm. on the Bible, p. xi.

^b Crisis, p. 3.

^c Sermon xv. vol. 11. p. 31.

ROOM FOR SCEPTICISM ITSELF TO FLUCTUATE IN SUSPENSE."^d "The predictions of this book" (says Mr. Gauntlett in his Exposition of the Revelation) "continue to receive their fulfilment during the lapse of ages ; and as they are accomplished in their order, they are *decidedly* EXPLAINED and ILLUSTRATED, but not before."^e "It is the universal character of the prophecies, that they are involved more or less in mystery and obscurity *previously to* their accomplishment, *after which* they become so LUCID AND PLAIN, that their fulfilment is *universally admitted*."^f The same statement is made in terms even stronger by Mr. Frere : "When a commentator has translated the symbolical and figurative language of a prophecy, into plain and simple language, he has done all that is peculiarly his province ; and there is no doubt (*if the interpretations be correct*) that when the events predicted *have actually occurred*, they will be so STRIKING, that NO ONE CAN easily fail in CORRECTLY applying them."^g

It is needless to add more testimonies on this point, and it is equally unnecessary to inform those who have carefully read any one of the leading works on the subject, that so far

^d Zouch on Prophecy : cited Br. Crit. xvii. 76.

^e Preface, p. xxxiii.

^f p. 160.

^g Combined View, p. 110.

from being thus "LUCID AND PLAIN"—so far from the supposed fulfilment leaving "no room for scepticism itself to fluctuate in suspense"—the prophecies supposed to be fulfilled during the period of 1260 years, are the subjects of incessant disputes and controversy. Is it not notorious, that even what is considered *fulfilled* prophecy, (take for instance, great part of the Apocalypse) is thought so obscure, and a matter of so much controversy,^h as to deter christians in general from attempting to understand it? In fact, the difficulty cannot be concealed, when men of piety, learning, and industry, are openly engaged in overthrowing each others systems, and when such men cannot agree, and christians in general do not pretend to give an opinion, *how*, or *when*, or even, in some cases,

^h We hear alternately of the *clearness*, and the *obscurity*, of fulfilled prophecy; but it is not often that we find these contradictory ideas placed in close contact as they are by a writer in the British Critic, when reviewing Mr. Faber's work on the prophecies relative to Judah and Israel. When we find *so much* EMBARRASSMENT, and such CONTRARIETY OF OPINION in the application of many prophecies confessedly fulfilled, what difficulties may we not expect to contend with in predictions whose event is in the womb of time. It is in the nature of unfulfilled prophecy to appear fraught with contradiction, which human sagacity will labour in vain to reconcile, till the time when the event predicted shall UNRAVEL ALL PERPLEXITIES, and establish the inspiration of the prophet."—*Vol. xxxvi. p. 471.*

whether a prophecy has been accomplished, we seem naturally led to the conclusion that it still remains unfulfilled. Mr. Faber, indeed, says, "The real fact is, that with the exception of Grotius and Hammond, and one or two who have followed them, *there is NO DISCREPANCY among protestant expositors* WITH REGARD TO THE GREAT OUTLINES of *prophetic interpretation*."¹ It will be for the reader, however, to judge whether the matters adduced are merely subordinate particulars. If they are, I freely admit, that they form no objection to the reception of systems in which they occur; and in which they are only such imperfections as necessarily attend all the works of man.

¹ I print this passage as it stands in Mr. Faber's third volume, page 295; but as he is there in controversy with a Roman Catholic, I am not certain how far he means the position to extend. He may, perhaps, mean it only to apply to the predictions respecting the papacy; but how he could intend it to be understood, even on that point, I do not perceive, when he had said, only twenty pages before, "I do *not* suppose the Pope to be Antichrist; a *real* protestant novelty, peculiar, I believe, to Bishop Horsley and myself." Bishop Newton, who may be supposed to have seen enough of the expositors of prophecy, to know whether they agreed or not, makes a very different statement. In his Dissertation on Daniel's Vision of the Four Empires, he says, "to recite all the various opinions of commentators, would be but heaping up a monument of the absurdities of former ages."—*Diss. xiv. vol. i. p. 433.*

Let us then enquire, what agreement exists among expositors as to the "general outline" of the Apocalypse. If it would be unfair to exact a precise conformity respecting the minute details of the Seals and Trumpets---if it would be too much to expect perfect agreement as to all the lesser circumstances even of that which has been fulfilled---yet, might we not expect agreement if we should ask, when, and how (not on what day, but in what century, and by what sort of facts,) was the prediction connected with any given Seal, fulfilled? Suppose, for instance, we should ask what was the period of the fourth seal, from three writers, whose piety, learning, and industry, have justly, and even necessarily, placed them high in the public estimation. Mr. Faber would refer us to some period *prior* to the year A. D. 325; Mr. Frere would answer that it began A. D. 536, and ended 556; and Mr. Cuninghame would tell us, that it began in the thirteenth, and ended in the latter part of the seventeenth century.

Let the reader compare the different views which these expositors have given of the Seals and Trumpets, as they stand in the following table; and let him say, whether they agree even in the "general outline."

	FABER.	CUNINGHAME.	FRERE.
1 Seal		The greater part of the first 3 centuries.	330—363.
2		Chiefly 4th and 5th centuries.	387—394.
3		A very long period, commencing in the 5th century.	408—476.
4	Refer to a period prior to A. D. 323.	13th to the latter part of 17th century.	536—556.
5		Explanatory of the preceding seals.	Begins and ends about 606.
6		Begins 10th Aug. 1792, & continues to the millenium.	1789 to 10th Aug. 1792.
7	{ Begins 323, Ends 1941.	Includes the trumpets.	26th Aug. 1792 to 1822-3.

This table is formed from two which are given in Mr. Frere's Combined View ; one of which contains his own system, and the other, those of Mr. Faber and Mr. Cuninghame.

Looking at the discordant opinions which this table exhibits, I must say, that they do not appear to be trifling differences about subordinate matters of detail ; of this, however, let the reader judge.

Should we refer to the prophecy respecting the Witnesses, and enquire "Have they been slain, or is that event still future?" We are answered, that it is future, by "many writers of great judgment and eminence, among whom may be enumerated Archbishop Usher, Bishops Newton and Horsley, Archdeacon Woodhouse, Dr. Gill, Mr. Scott, and many others." I copy this from Mr. Gauntlett's exposition of Rev. xi. 7--12 ;* from which also I may add that, "some writers suppose that the *slaying, rising, and ascending* of the witnesses, refer to the constant and alternate persecutions, and triumphs of the confessors of Christ, during the whole period of twelve hundred and sixty years." "Another class of interpreters are of opinion, that this prophecy received its completion in the case of John Huss and Jerome of Prague." "Others refer its accomplishment to the popish persecution in England in bloody Mary's reign about the year 1553. Some to the mas-

* If the reader wishes for more specific reference to the authors who have severally maintained these opinions, let him consult Bishop Newton on the passage.

sacre of the protestants in France in 1572, and others to the cruelty exercised on the Waldenses in Piedmont, under the Duke of Savoy, A. D. 1685."....."The next hypothesis is supported by many eminent writers, among which are Messrs. Faber, Cuninghame, Holmes, and Fuller, with Dr. Bryce Johnston, and others.--- These commentators confidently suppose that the prophecy of the death and resurrection of the witnesses received its accomplishment in the suppression of protestantism in Germany A. D. 1548. And its restoration about three years and a half afterward A. D. 1551." To these various and conflicting opinions, more might be added. Indeed Mr. Irving, the latest writer whose work I have seen, following Brightman,¹ and several other commentators,^m sets

¹ It is not worth while to enter into all the subdivisions, which exist even among those writers who are classed together; but it is curious to see how little agreement there is even among those of whom it may be said, that they do not differ as to the general outline. Of course Brightman did not apply this prophecy as Mr. Irving does, to the impieties of the French Revolution; on the contrary, opposing the opinion of the fathers, he says, "we that have seen the matter long since accomplished, may *determine for a CERTAINTY* that the Holy Ghost had another manner of meaning than this," and then proceeds to state his own opinion, that the two witnesses were the "*Holy Scriptures*" and "*the assembly of the Saints*." If I understand him, (and I am

^m See Poole's Synopsis in l.

them all aside, and says, "in the very first face and shewing of the thing, if God hath two witnesses upon the earth, the Old and New Testament are they."

Surely it will not be contended, that the slaying of the witnesses is a small and subordinate matter. Every expositor has treated the prediction as one of great importance, and has brought forward the facts in which he supposed it to be fulfilled, as matters of much consequence to the church; neither can it be said, that the discrepancy of opinion is small.

But, if we can persuade ourselves, that the prophecy of the Witnesses is one of those subordinate matters, in which we are not to expect agreement among expositors; how can

by no means confident that I do) these two witnesses were not slain at the same time, but "sentence of death was passed against the Scriptures in the year 1546 April 8th," and they remained dead until 9th November 1549. and the Church "lay for dead from the 22. of April the year 1547, unto the calends of Octob. of the year 1550." It is somewhat singular that the periods here fixed for the *revival of the witnesses*, both fall within the time during which the preceding class of commentators consider the witnesses as *lying actually dead*. Surely the coincidence between the History and the Prophecy cannot be very striking, if both these opinions are in *any degree plausible*, which I cannot but suppose they are, when I find Mr. Faber stating, (vol. II. p. 78) that he once agreed with the second part of Brightman's opinion.

we possibly bring ourselves to the same view of a fact, which must be allowed to be of awful and intense interest to the church of God? I mean, the delivery of that church into the hands of a blasphemous and persecuting power. If such an event as this has taken place, is it possible that the church of God can be at a loss to decide *when* and *how* it happened? Can there be a difference of opinion among pious, and learned, and laborious enquirers into the word of God, and the history of the church? Nay farther, if we ask, "is the church at this moment in the hands of the blasphemous little horn, or is it not?" Mr. Faber and many more assert that it is. Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Frère, and others, are as fully convinced that it is not; and nine-tenths of the christian world stand silent, avowedly unable to give any opinion on the subject. They may, or may not, be in the hands of the little horn, and he may, or may not, be wearing them out, for any thing they know---they hope and believe that they are "the saints," but whether the Beast is making war with, and has overcome, them, they cannot tell---it is a deep, curious, and litigated question, and one on which, among so many conflicting opinions, they never pretended to form a judgment for themselves.

Let us revert to the statement with which we set out. Is it true, as Mr. Scott affirms,

that by means of "a grand system of previous information as to the designs of providence," "ANY ONE IN ANY AGE, who well understood the prophecies extant in his day, might have known what to expect in the specified times, and in the specified countries?" And did the church expect its delivery into the hands of the little horn? No. When did the saints find out that they had been delivered over? Not for ages. Is this credible? But in fact when did it happen? When, how, and by whom was this great prediction fulfilled? On this point, too, there is a great difference of opinion. Surely it is not sufficient to say, that we know *about* what time the 1260 years must have begun. In the first place, allowing it all reasonable latitude, that phrase is not sufficient to comprehend the centuries by which expositors have differed; and in the second, let it ever be remembered, that we are not speaking of a merely chronological difference. We are not enquiring in what year certain historical facts took place, but in what year (that is by what *facts*) a prediction was fulfilled. If, then, the difference between expositors were only one year, yet if the places, persons, and historical circumstances generally, were changed by that difference of time, the variation would be total. Thus at least it appears to me. If, for instance, one writer should say, "the saints were given

into the hands of the little horn by the edict of Justinian in the year 533 ;" and another should reply, " I agree with you that they were delivered by that edict ; but it was not issued until the year 606 : " the difference between them would be purely chronological, and it would be unfair to represent them as differing respecting the fulfilment of the prophecy. But if (as Mr. Faber might reply to Messrs. Frere and Cunningham) he should answer, " The saints were not delivered into the hands of the little horn by the edict of Justinian in the year 533---they were as free after it as before it---Justinian and his edict had nothing whatever to do with the fulfilment of the prophecy---it was not fulfilled, until he and his generation had passed away." And in this case it might be rejoined, that the Emperor Phocas and the Pope of the year 606 could have nothing to do with the fulfilment of a prophecy which had been accomplished more than seventy years. It seems to me, that the point in dispute between these writers is not merely a chronological difference of a few years, but that they disagree entirely as to the application of the prophecy to history.

Nor are these two the only periods which have been fixed upon. This momentous event, according to Mede,^a took place in A. D. 456 ;

^a It may be objected, that the 1260 years of Mede have

according to Mr. Frere in A. D. 533, when the edict of Justinian was published; the anonymous author of a system, characterized by Dr. Hales as, "perhaps, the most ingenious of its class,"^o places it A. D. 583; Mr. Faber, as I have already stated, begins from the year 606; Dr. Hales^p reckons from A. D. 620; Bishop Newton from A. D. 727; and Lowman from A. D. 756.

long since elapsed; but in order to our forming a right judgment, it is absolutely necessary to take into consideration those hypotheses which have been refuted by time. The weight of any writer's opinion as to the events which seemed most clearly to accomplish the prediction, and fix the time when the saints were delivered into the hands of the little horn, cannot be diminished by the failure of his hypothesis. It will not be doubted, that the history of all the periods fixed on by others was well known to Mede, and there was nothing to prevent him from chusing any one of them, except that he did not discern among them all, such a fulfilment as he thought that he discovered in the events of the year 456.

His authority, then, whatever it may be, *as to the accordance of historical facts in 456 with the language of prophecy*, remains undiminished by the lapse of the 1260 years, because though time may have shewn his opinion to be erroneous, yet it cannot be denied, that all the facts of history lay before him, and that he decided on those which occurred at that period, as best agreeing with the terms of the prophecy. It is obvious that these remarks apply equally to Whiston and other writers, whose systems have been refuted by time.

^o Analysis, vol. II. p. 1358.

^p Ib. p. 566.

I cannot help again expressing my astonishment at the supposed state of the Church of God. Is it credible, that she has to wander up and down through a period of nearly three centuries, enquiring when she was delivered into the hand of a cruel and blasphemous tyrant? Are the saints of the Most High so ignorant, not only of their destiny, but of their history, as that they know not when, how, or by whom, this tremendous prediction was executed? The delivery of the saints into the hand of their persecutor was surely a solemn act. "We may," says Mr. Faber, "naturally conclude, that they were given into his hand, both by some formal deed, and some specific person."

And might we not expect that this solemn act of her delivery, would be known in her assemblies---registered in her calendar---commemorated in her services---never, never lost sight of by her members? But instead of this, the saints who were thus delivered up knew nothing of the matter. One generation after another passed away, and the secret was not discovered. Centuries rolled on, and the saints knew not, that he to whom they looked as their father, and their head, was making war upon them, and wearing them out. For ages did the church of God quietly follow a hireling, with

the brand of perdition on their foreheads. Was there no servant of Christ who, "understood the prophecies extant in his days," sufficiently to warn his brethren?---did no eye fall upon the tremendous curse, "If any man worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out, without mixture, into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the Beast and his image, and WHOSOEVER RECEIVETH THE MARK OF HIS NAME?"

Mr. Faber says, "the testimony of those who lived before the reformation is peculiarly valuable and curious. Much of this has been collected by Bishop Newton in his excellent deduction of the line of the witnesses through the entire period of the dark ages."* He appears to have followed the Bishop implicitly, and therefore, I wish, before I make any remarks on the testimony which has been collected, to express my full conviction, that Mr. Faber's only fault in this matter has been, that

* Vol. III. p. 295.

he inconsiderately followed one whom he believed capable of such conduct as he has charged upon that writer.*

But taking this testimony as it stands in Mr. Faber's abstract, what does it amount to? "Gerbert, Archbishop of Rheims in the year 991," (that is, 385 years after the time when, on Mr. Faber's hypothesis, the saints were delivered into the hand of the little horn,) "spoke of the reigning Pope John XV. in the following remarkable terms: 'What do you conceive this man, sitting on a lofty throne, glittering in purple clothing and in gold; what, I say, do you conceive him to be? If he is destitute of charity, and puffed up by knowledge alone, he is Antichrist, *sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God:*' in other words, he is *St. Paul's Man of Sin.*" Supposing these words to belong to Gerbert, it may be sufficient to observe, that if by Antichrist he meant John XV. *individually*, his speech is nothing to our purpose; if he meant to apply the title to him *as Pope*, or to *the Papacy*, the value of his testimony may be estimated from the fact, that he afterwards became Pope himself. If, however, they are his words, (and they may be, for he is said to have collected the acts" of that Council

* See before, page 40.

"That is the "*longe proximiora acta*" as Cave calls them, which alone contain this speech,

which were not known to the world until the Centuriators of Magdeburgh published them from an accurate copy which they fortunately had by them,)---if I say, the words are Gerbert's, he has put them in the mouth of Arnold, Bishop of Orleans; and even if they were spoken of the Pope," I think they will by no

They say "cum autem hujus Synodi acta, in vetusto codice accurate conscripta, ad manum haberemus: visum est ea integra inserere; quia alias non extabant. Apparet autem, Gerbertum fuisse collectorem."—*Cent. x. p. 246.*

"I cannot help feeling some doubt on this point, because it seems as if the Bishop was speaking of some one present in the Council. The Pope was not there; Arnold, the Bp. of Rheims, was. The Council was convened to investigate charges of high treason against him; and after giving more time to the question than it is worth, I feel a suspicion that he was the person intended. But I am quite satisfied, that the testimony should remain pointed at John XV. and prove all that it fairly can. That it proves the Bishop of Orleans to have *seriously believed* the Head of his Church, and his acknowledged Ecclesiastical Superior to be Antichrist, or the Man of Sin, I think the reader will scarcely admit, yet this is the very question, and the only one. I am willing, and thankful to acknowledge, that there were those, even in that dark age, who saw, and exposed, and resisted, the usurpations of the Bishop of Rome; and if I have robbed Gerbert of this testimony, I will do him the justice to bring forward a better specimen of his Protestantism, from a letter of his to Seguin, Archbishop of Sens. "Deus dicit: Si peccaverit in te frater tuus, vade et corripe eum, &c. Quomodo igitur vestri æmuli dicunt, quia in Arnulphi dejectione, Romani Episcopi judicium expectandum fuit?"

means convince the reader, that he who uttered them seriously believed the Pope, *as such*, to be Antichrist, though he might, in the heat of declamation, apply that title to any ecclesiastic: “*IF destitute of charity, and puffed up by knowledge ALONE.*”

Such as it was, however, it is not pretended that this testimony was listened to, or that any one else repeated it, during more than a century; and then, says Mr. Faber, “In like manner, Fluentius Bishop of Florence taught publicly that Antichrist was born and come into the world, for which he was severely reprimanded.”

Poterunt ne docere, Romani Episcopi judicium, Dei judicij majus esse? Sed primus Romanorum Episcoporum, immo ipsorum Apostolorum princeps clamat, “Oportet obedire Deo magis quam hominibus.” Clamat et ipse orbis terrarum magister Paulus, “Si quis vobis annuntiaverit præter quod accepistis, etiamsi Angelus de cælo, anathema sit. Num quia Marcellinus Papa Jovi thura incendit, ideo cunctis Episcopis thurificandum fuit? Constanter dico, quod si ipse Romanus Episcopus in fratrem peccaverit, sæpiusque admonitus, Ecclesiam non audierit, hic, inquam, Romanus Episcopus præcepto Dei est habendus sicut ethnicus et publicanus: quanto enim gradus altior, tanto ruina gravior.”

Horror-struck at this explosion of protestantism, Baronius, who quotes it, subjoins—“O! sententiam homine tantum sive magno aliquo hæretico, sive impudenti valde Schismatico dignam, qua sacra simul concilia abrogantur, canones jugulantur, traditiones suffocantur, et cuncta denique jura ecclesiastica pessumdantur! ut impossibile videatur a catholico homine somnari ista nedum adeo procaciter effutiri.”—*Ann. Eccles: A. D.* 992.

manded by the Pope, in the year 1105, and strictly forbidden to preach any such doctrine." But in fact, though Fluentius preached the birth of Antichrist, did he mean to apply this title to the Pope, or the Papacy? What is the evidence on which we are expected to believe, that this Bishop "publicly taught" that his ecclesiastical superior was Antichrist? I have not been able to find any. The Magdeburgh Centuriators, indeed, set it down, that as he talked of Antichrist, he must "no doubt" have meant the Pope.^x They were not so happy as to possess any "*acta prolixiora*" of the council which examined him, and those which exist throw no light on his sentiments.^y They cite no writer to confirm their application of his words; nor do they pretend that there was any writer who so understood them; but they admit that there were writers who stated that he was led to say what he did by natural phenomena, such as the faithful of that age expected to precede the revelation of Antichrist.^z These

^x "Audebat palam asseverare, Antichristum jam natum esse, idque, HAUD-DUBIE animadvertit, ex illa horribili metamorphosi regni Christi, spiritualis in mundanum,"—*Cent. XII. cap. ix. Col. 566.*

^y Silentium autem de argumentis ipsius altum est.—*Ib.*

^z Scribunt aliqui, prodigia, quæ plurima tum fiebant, majorem ipsi materiam cogitandi de Antichristo præbuisse: ut quod mare retrocesserit et similia. Verum SINE DUBIO

writers, however they conclude, were mistaken, and that "no doubt" he *must* have been led to form his opinion from the marks of Antichrist which were then visible in the Papacy. The reader will judge for himself; but I cannot believe without good evidence, (and I find none at all) that Paschal II. or any Pontiff of the twelfth century, would have been satisfied with "severely reprimanding" a Bishop who had "publicly taught" that *himself*, or *his office*, was Antichrist; though I can well understand that he might rebuke him for disturbing the peace of society, and forbid him to preach what he, most probably, considered not only false but mischievous.*

gravioribus causis, certioribus notis et characteribus Antichristi, quæ publice in conspectu versabantur, motus est.
—*Ib.*

* "Lord Cobham and the two Bohemian Martyrs," says Bishop Hurd, (*Introd.* p. 241) "were committed to the flames, for nothing so much, as for asserting the impious doctrine 'that the Pope was Antichrist.'" This may be believed, and is, indeed, what might have been expected; but what a sweet-tempered Pontiff must he have been, who contented himself with reprimanding a Bishop for having "publicly taught" this "impious doctrine," and then sent him back to his see, with a simple prohibition. Nor was Paschal II., according to Bishop Hurd, the only Pope whose christian meekness was thus tried and manifested. Leo X. he tells us, "in the last Lateran Council, gave it in charge to all preachers, that none of them should presume to call the Pope, Antichrist, or to treat this obnoxious

The only other witnesses, before the time of the Waldenses, are St. Bernard and Joachim of Calabria. The latter of these Mr. Faber states to have “asserted, that Antichrist was

subject in their discourses to the people.” (*Ibid*, p. 242.) This is a good round assertion; but it is not supported by the garbled citation at the foot of the page, which is as follows: “Mandantes omnibus, &c.—*tempus quoque præfixum futurorum malorum, vel ANTICHRISTI ADVENTUM—prædicare, vel asserere, nequaquam præsumant.* BIN. CONC. Lateran. v. sub Leone X. Sess XI. p. 632.” The absurdity of a statement which represents a Pope in council, as charging his clergy not to call him Antichrist, is apparent; and its falsehood would have been equally manifest if the Bishop had cited the whole passage. I subjoin it, printing in *italics* those words which are omitted by the Bishop. “Mandantes omnibus *qui hoc onus sustinent, quique in futurum sustinebunt ut Evangelicam veritatem, et sanctam scripturam juxta declarationem, interpretationem, et ampliacionem doctorum, quos Ecclesia vel usus diuturnus approbavit, legendosque hactenus recepit, et in posterum recipiet, prædicent & explanent: nec quidquam ejus proprio sensui contrarium, aut dissonum adjiciant, sed illis semper insistant, quæ ab ipsius sacræ scripturæ verbis, et præfatorum doctorum interpretationibus, rite et sane intellectis, non discordant.* Tempus quoque præfixum futurorum malorum, vel antichristi adventum aut certum diem judicii prædicare, vel asserere nequaquam præsumant, cum veritas dicat, *Non esse vestrum nosse tempora vel momenta, quæ Pater posuit in sua potestate: ipsosque qui hactenus similia asserere ausi sunt, mentitos ac eorum causâ, reliquorum etiam recte prædicantium auctoritati non modicum detractum fuisse constet.*” I do not know what edition the Bishop used; but in that of Paris, 1636, this passage stands vol. ix. p. 142.

“already born in the city of Rome; that he
 “would be advanced to the apostolic chair,
 “and would be “*exalted above all that is called*
 “*God or worshipped* ;” the well known predict-
 “ed characteristic of the Man of Sin.” Joachim
 is not, perhaps, a person whose testimony would
 be called for, if evidence were not very scarce.
 But how does it appear that he meant to stig-
 matize the POPE, or the *papacy*, with the name
 of Antichrist? I conceive that he, like Flu-
 entius, (and, as far as I know, every writer of
 his, or any preceding, age,) expected an indi-
 vidual Antichrist; and knowing that when he
 should be revealed, he would be impiously ex-
 alted above all that was called God, or wor-
 shipped, he not unnaturally supposed that he
 would fulfil these predictions, by usurping the
 Pontifical Chair. What, however, were his
 real sentiments I know not, for I have not the
 means of consulting authorities.

St. Bernard's works, however, I do possess;
 and to them I shall refer the reader; but, let
 me first ask, whether it has not struck him as a
 thing altogether incredible, that any man should
 have remained in full communion with one
 whom he *really believed* to be ANTICHRIST? If
 such a man could be found, would his testi-
 mony weigh one feather, and should we not
 rather be ashamed to cite such a miscreant or
 madman? Surely we have talked about Anti-

christ, and the Man of Sin, until familiarity with the title has beguiled us of all right notion respecting the character, or we could never seriously argue at this rate. "These witnesses," says Mr. Faber, (that is, Gerbert or Arnold, Fluentius, Joachim and Bernard—all that can be cited until the twelfth century,) "were in the very bosom of the Romish church." Yes---if their testimony is relevant to the point which it is brought forward to establish, they lived and died in full communion with one whom THEY BELIEVED to be THE MAN OF SIN---in profest allegiance to one whom THEY CONSIDERED and OPENLY DENOUNCED as ANTI-CHRIST---manfully fighting under the banner of THE SON OF PERDITION, and obeying him with humble duty as their SPIRITUAL HEAD. It is incredible! Of Gerbert and Fluentius, indeed, we know comparatively little---of Joachim, perhaps nothing that should lead us to doubt that he might be guilty of any folly or madness;---but it is too much to ask us to believe this of St. Bernard. Ignorant on some points he might be---superstitious on many, he certainly was---but it is shameful to drag forth a man of his glowing piety, as one who *knowingly* worshipped the Beast, and grasped the right hand of Antichrist. It is shameful to pervert his words, in order to make it appear as if he had wittingly leagued with the powers of Hell,

and sold himself to the Son of Perdition. And, after all, on what evidence are we required to believe this? Mr. Faber says, "St. Bernard himself, however devoted to the Romish church *in other respects*,^b inveighed loudly against the corruption of the clergy, and the pride and tyranny of the Popes; saying that they were ministers of Christ, and yet served Antichrist, that nothing remained but that the Man of Sin should be revealed, and that the Beast in the Apocalypse occupied St. Peter's chair."

I repeat, that I fully acquit Mr. Faber of intentional misrepresentation, and that I do not mean the expressions which I have used to apply to him: I cannot, however, bring myself to qualify them, as it regards Bishop Hurd, because he professes to have examined into the matter. At the end of a note which I shall quote presently, he says, "I mention these things so particularly to shew, *what his sentiments on this head really were*; which have been misrepresented by hasty writers, who transcribe from each other, without examining, themselves, the authorities, they quote." What,

^b This expression is used also by Bishops Hurd and Newton. He *only* "employed all the thunder of his rhetoric, in which faculty he excelled," in proclaiming that the Pope was Antichrist.

then, does the Bishop give us as the *real sentiments* of St. Bernard? He tells us that, devoted as he was to the church of Rome, "he employed all the thunder of his rhetoric (in which faculty he excelled) against its corruptions; exclaiming that the ministers of Christ were become the servants of Antichrist; and the Beast of the Apocalypse had seated himself in St. Peter's chair." And on this passage he adds the following note: "MINISTRI CHRISTI SUNT ET SERVIUNT ANTICHRISTO. [*Serm. sup. Cantic. xxxviii.*] It is true, by Antichrist he seems not to mean the Pope, but in general an evil principle, which then domineered in the church. Yet he refers us to the famous passage in the first epistle to the Thessalonians, ch. ii. And he tells us in his 56th epistle, that he had heard one Norbert, a man of exemplary piety say, that Antichrist would be revealed in that age. Hence it seems probable that some one person or power was in his eye. After all, he says, that Norbert's reasons did not satisfy him. Yet, in another epistle, he asserts expressly---*Bestia illa de Apocalypsi, cui datum est os loquens blasphemias, et bellum gerere cum sanctis, PETRI CATHEDRAM OCCUPAT, tanquam leo paratus ad prædam. Ep. cxxv.*; which was, in other words, to call the Pope Antichrist. It is evident that St. Bernard

applied the prophecies in the Revelations to the successor of St. Peter."^c

There is no doubt that the words first cited in this note, stand in one of St. Bernard's Homilies, but as the Bishop admits that they do not seem to mean that the Pope was Antichrist, it is unnecessary to say any thing on the subject. Here, as elsewhere, St. Bernard's voice is raised with holy and fervent indignation against the corruption of the age, but it is false to insinuate that he called those of whom he spoke, "ministers of Antichrist," because they were ministers of the Papacy, and it would never have been thought of by any unprejudiced writer.^d As fairly might we charge a priest of the Church of England with high treason, if, in a torrent of invective, he should tell his pa-

^c Introduction. Serm. vii. p. 234.

^d Let the reader judge. "Væ generationi huic a fermento Phariseorum, quod est hypocrisis! si tamen hypocrisis dici debet, quæ jam latere præ abundantia non valet, et præ impudentia non quærit. Serpit hodie putida tabes per omne corpus Ecclesiæ et quo latius, eo desperatius; eoque periculosius, quo interius. Nam si insurgeret apertus inimicus hæreticus absconderet se forsitan ab eo. Nunc vero quem ejiciet aut a quo abscondet se? Omnes amici, et omnes inimici: omnes necessarii, et omnes adversarii: omnes domestici, et nulli pacifici: omnes proximi et omnes quæ sua sunt quærent. Ministri Christi sunt, et serviunt Antichristo"

rishioners, that they were subjects of the prince of darkness. "Yet," says the Bishop, "he refers us to II. Thes. ii." No doubt he does; but not as the Bishop would insinuate, in any way that should connect the Pope or the Papacy with that prediction. He says, indeed, after inveighing against the vices and luxuries, and the corruptions of his age, that nothing remained but that Antichrist should be revealed to seduce those who were yet abiding in Christ, and standing fast in the simplicity of the gospel, if any such were still left: a sufficient proof, if any were wanting, that he did not believe that Antichrist had been already revealed in the Papacy. This, indeed, appears from the next point stated by the Bishop. St. Bernard, he says, "tells us in his 56 epistle, that he had heard one Norbert, a man of exemplary piety, say, 'that Antichrist would be revealed in that age!' Hence it seems probable that some one person or power was in his eye." Undoubtedly one person was in his eye---in conformity with the general opinion of his own and preceding ages, he expected an individual Antichrist, who should raise "a general persecution of the church," and this is manifest from this very epistle; but the Bishop did not quote what relates to this point, feeling, I presume, that it would be rather too much to ask his

readers to believe, that St. Bernard actually expected the Pope, or the Papacy, to raise "*a general persecution of the church.*"*

But the most disgraceful citation is that which follows: "YET," says the Bishop, (again insidiously connecting things which have no connection whatever) in another epistle he asserts expressly---"*Bestia illa de Apocalypsi, cui datum est os loquens blasphemias, et bellum gerere cum sanctis PETRI CATHEDRAM OCCUPAT, tanquam leo paratus ad prædam, Ep. cxxv:* which was in other words to call the Pope, Antichrist." These are indeed the words of Bernard; but it seems impossible to suppose, that Bishop Hurd was ignorant that by the "*apocalyptic beast,*" St. Bernard meant, not the POPE, but, the ANTIPOPE; and by the "*saints*" with whom he made war, the Pope and his adherents. In fact, that the "*LEO paratus ad prædam*" was Peter Leo who, having usurped the pontifical chair, under the title of Anacletus II, had driven Innocent II. from

* "*Verum de Antichristo cum inquirerem quid sentiret, durante adhuc ea, quæ nunc est, generatione revelandum illum esse se certissime scire protestatus est. At cum eandem certitudinem unde haberet, sciscitanti mihi exponere vellet; audito quod respondit, non me illud pro certo credere debere putavi. Ad summam tamen hoc asseruit, non visurum se mortem, nisi prius videat generalem in Ecclesia persecutionem.*" *Ep. lvi.*

Rome. Against this usurper, Bernard's language is as unmeasured, as his devotion to the Pope. He calls him the Man of Sin, the Apocalyptic Beast, and the abomination of desolation; but how does he speak of the Pope, *in the very letter* quoted by Bishop Hurd? It is addressed to Geoffrey of Loroux; its object is simply to stir him up to assist the exiled Pontiff, and he recites with exultation a list of the sovereigns who, with their clergy, and subjects, adhered to Pope Innocent "AS CHILDREN TO THEIR FATHER, AS MEMBERS TO THE HEAD." In short, in the language of Bernard, (and I wish I could suppose the Bishop not to have known it) the POPE is the LORD'S ANOINTED---the POPE is THE CHRIST, and the ANTI-POPE is ANTICHRIST.^f Bishop Hurd might,

^f Tempus faciendi nunc, quia dissipaverunt legem. Bestia illa de Apocalypsi cui datum est os loquens blasphemias, et bellum gerere cum sanctis, Petri cathedram occupat, tanquam leo paratus ad prædam. Altera quoque bestia" (Gerardus Engolismensis) "juxta vos subsibilat, sicut catulus habitans in abditis. Illa ferocior, ista callidior, pariter convenerunt in unum ADVERSUS DOMINUM, ET ADVERSUS CHRISTUM EJUS. Demus operam cito dirumpere vincula eorum, et projicere a nobis jugum ipsorum. Nos in nostris partibus, una cum aliis Dei servis divino igne accensis, Deo cooperante laboravimus in conveniendo populos in unum, et reges ad dirumpendum pravorum consensum, ad destruendam omnem altitudinem extollentem se adversus scientiam Dei. Nec infructuose. Alemanniæ, Franciæ,

perhaps think that he was doing God service ; but surely every honest man will look with scorn, and indignation, on such falsehood.

Angliæ, Scotiæ, Hispaniarum, et Jerosolymorum Reges, cum universo Clero et Populis, favent et adhærent Domino Innocentio TANQUAM FILII PATRI, TANQUAM CAPITI MEMBRA, solliciti servare unitatem spiritus in vinculo pacis." Could Bishop Hurd have read this letter ? or that which precedes it, and begins " Ut verbis vos prophetici alloquar, ' Consolatio abscondita est in oculis quia mors dividit inter fratres.' Quidam enim juxta Isaiam videntur fœdus percussisse cum morte, et cum inferno fecisse pactum. Ecce namque CHRISTUS DOMINI ISTE INNOCENTIUS positus est in ruinam et in resurrectionem multorum. Nam QUI DEI SUNT LIBENTER JUNGUNTUR EI : QUI AUTEM EX ADVERSO STAT AUT ANTICHRISTI EST, AUT ANTICHRISTUS. Cernitur abominatio stare in loco sancto, quem ut obtineret incendit ignis sanctuarium Dei. Persequitur Innocentium, et cum eo omnem innocentiam. Fugit ille nimirum a facie LEONIS &c."—Ep. cxxiv. Again, when Innocent had fled to Pisa, Bernard thus wrote to the inhabitants ; " Assumitur Pisa in locum Romæ et de cunctis urbibus terræ ad Apostolicæ Sedis culmen eligitur. Nec fortuitu sive humano contigit istud consilio : sed cœlesti providentia, et Dei benigno favore fit, qui diligentes se diligit, qui dixit CHRISTO SUO INNOCENTIO, " Pisam inhabita, et ego benedicens benedicam ei."—Ep. cxxx. In his letter to the Bishops of Aquitaine against Gerard of Angouleme, (the person alluded to in the former letter as a second and more crafty beast,) he says of Anacletus, " Quis vero ille, nisi HOMO PECCATI, qui super electum a catholicis catholicum, et canonice, locum sanctum invasit, quem tamen, non quia sanctus, sed quia summus est, affectavit ?"—Ep. cxxvi. Bernard's idea of what the Bishop of Rome was,

I think it must strike those who read Bishop Newton's "deduction of the Line of Witnesses through the entire period of the Dark Ages,"

as to his office, and ought to be, as to his character, may be gathered from the following address to his own son in the faith Pope Eugenius III. : " Consideres ante omnia Sanctam Romanam Ecclesiam, cui Deo auctore præes, ecclesiarum *matrem* esse, non *Dominam* : te vero non *Dominum* Episcoporum, sed *unum ex ipsis* ; porro *fratrem diligentem Deum*, et *participem timentium eum*. De cetero oportere te esse *considera formam justitiæ, sanctimoniam speculum, pietatis exemplar, assertorem veritatis, fidei defensorem, doctorem gentium, Christianorum ducem, amicum sponsi, sponsæ paranympum, cleri ordinatorem, pastorem plebium, magistrum insipientium, refugium oppressorum, pauperum advocatum, miserorum spem, tutorem pupillorum, judicem viduarum, ocalum cæcorum, linguam mutorum, baculum senum, ultorem seclerum, malorum metum, bonorum gloriam, virgam potentium, malleum tyrannorum, regum patrem, legum moderatorem, canonum dispensatorem, sal terræ, orbis lumen sacerdotem Altissimi, VICARIUM CHRISTI, CHRISTUM DOMINI : POSTREMO DEUM PHARAONIS.*" *De Consid.* l. iv. c. vii. The reader will hardly be persuaded that Bernard addressed this to one whom he even suspected of being the Man of Sin ; but (long as this note is) let me do justice to his protestant spirit, by extracting the following address to the same Pontiff : " *Hic, hic, non parco tibi, ut parcat Deus. Pastorem te populo huic certe aut nega, aut exhibe. Non negabis : ne cujus sedem tenes, te neget hæredem. Petrus hic est qui nescitur processisse aliquando vel gemmis ornatus, vel sericis ; non tectus auro, non vectus equo albo, nec stipatus milite, nec circumstrepentibus sæptus ministris. Absque his tamen credidit satis posse impleri salutare mandatum, ' Si amas me, pasce oves meas.'*" In his successisti,

as a very remarkable, if not incredible, thing, that the APOCALYPTIC WITNESSES should have prophesied for ages with the MARK OF THE BEAST on their foreheads. Yet I know not what else to understand. Did the witness Gerbert pass through his Pontificate without the mark of the Beast? Did the Bishop of Orleans, the Archbishop of Florence, and the Abbots of Flora and Clairvaux, escape the stigma? If Bernard had not the mark of the Beast, that mark is not, I think, to be found in prostrate devotion to the Papacy; yet if protestation against the corruption of the church, and comparative purity of doctrine, did not constitute him a witness, I know not what man before his time could claim that character. It is indeed serving two masters in a way of which I can form no idea, and seems to me to be joining together, what God has put asunder, as far as the East from the West. I think the devotion

non Petro sed Constantino. Consulo toleranda pro tempore, non affectanda pro debito. Ad ea te potius incito quorum te scio debitorem. Etsi purpuratus, etsi deauratus incedens non est tamen quod horreas operam curamve pastorem, pastoris hæres: non est quod erubescas Evangelium. Quanquam si volens evangelizes, inter Apostolos quidem etiam gloria est tibi. Evangelizare, pascere est. Fac opus Evangelistæ, et pastoris opus implesti. Dracones, inquis, me mones pascere, et scorpiones, non oves. Propter hoc, inquam, magis aggredere eos; sed VERBO, non FERRO."—
De Consid. lib. iv. c. iii.

which our Lord and Master requires, will not permit us to talk of a man's being an accredited witness for Christ, on some points, "though in other respects devoted" to Antichrist. I leave it to others to explain how a man can at once bear on his forehead the mark of the Beast and the Seal of the living God.^a

Such, however, are the witnesses adduced; and I think the reader will agree with Mede, who states, that until the twelfth century, no one *suspected* that the Pope was Antichrist, and fixes the year 1120 as the beginning of the separation of the pious from the church of Rome.^b

^a See Scott's Commentary on Rev. xiv. 1—5, where he identifies the hundred and forty and four thousand who were sealed, with the witnesses: and adds from Mr. Faber, "by these hundred and forty-four thousand I understand peculiarly *the depressed church in the wilderness*, previous to the time of *the Reformation*: for history sufficiently demonstrates, that there have been in every age some faithful worshippers, who consented not to *the general apostacy*, but who prophesied, although in sackcloth, against its abominations."

^b "Nondum enim Romanum Pontificem esse magnum illum et *κρυπτός* dictum Antichristum vel Florentinus Antistes, *vel alii suspicati sunt*: sed alium triennalem et semestrem expectabant." And he adds, after speaking of a work said to be written in the year 1120, "Atque hoc fuit secessionis piorum a Romana Ecclesia initium; neque ante hoc tempus quicquam ex omni christianorum memoria auditum fuisse crediderim de Papatu magno illo et *κρυπτός* dicto Antichristo, neque alium expectandum esse."—*Rev. Ant.*

He is therefore obliged to suppose, that "the saints" had followed Antichrist nearly seven hundred years without finding it out. During that period I think it must be admitted, that they did not know, that they had been delivered into the hand of the little horn, and that the Pope did not assume that character by making war upon them.

Let me not be misunderstood to be the advocate of the Papacy. God forbid that I should deny, or extenuate, its heresies or its crimes; least of all would I do it, while the mushroom wisdom of "a liberal and enlightened age" is endeavouring to confound all distinctions in religion—when the brayings of operative declaimers echo back the bleatings of higher assemblies, to assure us that Protestants are Papists in all but the name, and that the fathers of our church

Works, p. 721, 722. "Mr. Mede supposes, and seems indeed to have proved, that the true doctrine of Antichrist was, and was intended to be, a mystery, or secret, till the twelfth century. Whence it follows, that the testimonies hitherto alledged are only passionate or declamatory exaggerations, or to be esteemed, as he says, *pro parabolice et kar' αυξησει dictis, declamatorum more.*—*Works, p. 722.* I admit the truth of the observation."—Will the reader believe that these are the words of Bishop Hurd? If he doubts, let him refer to a note, on the very page opposite to that which I have quoted, and understand, if he can, the attempt which is there made to reconcile statements so contradictory.

died at the stake to maintain a distinction without a difference. These are days when all protestants, and especially a protestant clergy, are called upon to watch against, and resist, the attacks of their enemies, and the more mischievous ignorance of their friends. I know that they cannot do this without the hazard of misconstruction—so liberal indeed has this age become, to all but old-fashioned principles, that if they express their opinion, the clergy may be charged with interested views; and, even in quarters where it might be expected that high association would at least restrain individual grossness, if it could not give candour, courtesy, or wisdom, they may be told that it is done “in a way of trade.” It is nevertheless to be done by all fair, honest and christian means; and, at such a time, as a priest of the Church of England, I should be sorry to be thought, for one moment, the advocate of a corrupt church, from which, through God’s mercy, we are separated, not merely by name, or political constitution, but by a pure and scriptural faith. Yet, sure I am, that the protestant cause requires not error or even false colouring for its support; and I would not willingly suppose any reader so dishonest, as to wish for the suppression of truth. Surely, even if we should not consider the Papacy either as Antichrist or the little horn, we leave it more curses than its

bitterest enemy could desire to see fulfilled. Surely it has blood enough to answer for, if we look only to its transactions *since* the twelfth century. And in fact, what did the Bishops of Rome do for ages after the period when the saints were delivered into their hands, that could be called MAKING WAR upon them, OVERCOMING, and WEARING THEM OUT? "The quiescence of the little horn," after the delivery of the saints into his hand, is treated as a thing not naturally to be supposed, yet so far as I can learn from history, there had been Bishops of Rome for more than a thousand years, before any one of them took upon him to make war upon the saints.¹ During all this time (if they opposed the progress of his pretensions to supremacy) the saints never doubted that he was a christian bishop—never withdrew from christian communion with him—never once suspected, that they were sealing their own damnation, by receiving his mark on their foreheads.

It appears to me, that the line of argument pursued by Bishop Hurd, in order to prove that Pagan Rome was not Antichrist, is of equal, or even greater force to shew, that the Bishop of Rome is not Antichrist, or the little horn: "now this circumstance," says the Bishop, "ye will

¹ "The Man of Sin," says Bishop Hurd, "had a convenient time to display himself, and to grow up," &c. p. 230.

surely think, not a little remarkable, that they, who lived under the Emperors, and felt the whole weight of their tyrannous persecution, should not apply the prophetic notes and characters of Antichrist, to *them*, if indeed the prophecies had been fairly capable of such application. This, I say, is exceedingly remarkable: for men are but too apt even to wrest the Scriptures to a sense, which favours their own cause, or gratifies their passions; and to find a completion of prophecy in events, which fall out in their own days, and concern themselves (as we see from so many absurd applications of the Apocalypse, justly objected to protestant writers;) though, when such events are passed, and impartially considered, no such accomplishment of prophecy can be discerned in them.

“When the church of Rome, therefore, now pretends that Antichrist is to be sought in Imperial and Pagan Rome, ye will naturally ask how it came to pass, that the ancient fathers, who had the best opportunity of seeing the conformity of the prophecies, and were so much interested in those transactions, should yet overlook such conformity, if it had been real, and fairly marked out by the prophecies, when interpreters of these days are so quick sighted? And to this question, no just and satisfactory answer can be given, but that in the opinion of those fathers, the characters of Antichrist were

not sufficiently applicable to the Roman Emperors; or if they were, that certain express clauses in the prophecies themselves forbade that application of them. Either way, their conduct forms a strong presumption, that the Antichrist of the prophets, was not, and could not be, the Roman Emperor."^k

Bishop Newton, opposing Wetstein, uses a similar argument; "If this prophecy was fulfilled as these critics conceive, before the destruction of Jerusalem, it is surprising that none of the fathers should agree with any of them in the same application, and that the discovery should first be made sixteen or seventeen hundred years after the completion. The fathers might differ, and be mistaken in the circumstances of a prophecy which was yet to be fulfilled; but that a prophecy should be remarkably accomplished before their time, and they be totally ignorant of it, and speak of the accomplishment as still future, is not very credible, and will always be a strong presumptive argument against any such interpretation."^l

If the Pope did not for so many ages perform the part assigned to the little horn, it may well lead us to suspect, that he was not the person prefigured by that symbol; if he did, it

^k Introduction, p. 222.

^l Diss. XXII, vol. II, p. 389.

is strange indeed, that those "who had the best opportunity of seeing the conformity of the prophecies, and were so much interested in those transactions, should yet overlook such conformity, if it had been real and fairly marked out by the prophecies."

But, explaining as we may, the ignorance of former ages, what is the state of things *now*? Here is the church of Christ, after writhing a millenium under the tyranny of the blasphemer, asking *WHEN* came I into his hands? Am I there *NOW*? It is strange indeed, that she should need to ask these questions; but it is stranger still, that her most enlightened guides should not agree in an answer. Surely this is not a subordinate matter; and surely it is not a trifling discrepancy, when Mede and Bishop Newton (to say nothing of the living) differ almost three centuries. Widely as I disagree, on some points, with the writer of an article in the *Theological Review*, which has fallen into my hands since most of these pages were written, I entirely concur with him when, speaking of the Apocalypse, he says, "The mine has not yet been laid open, and no man must feel himself entitled to say, that it shall have been opened by himself, but on the evidence of something more authentic than his own belief of his success. The prophecy was given, as all prophecies, for the honour of God, and the enlight-

ening of man. To say that it is incapable of clear and convincing interpretation; is to say, what we cannot under any shape admit, that the design of God has been frustrated. But as its purpose was to produce conviction, it must be laid down as a first principle with the interpreter, that GENERAL CONVICTION IS THE ONLY TEST. The individual or his party may be satisfied, but this is nothing, without the satisfaction of that various multitude, whose verdict is beyond partiality or passion, and for whose wisdom, encouragement, and advance in the faith, all revelation was given."^m

This "general conviction" (thanks be to God,) we have in some cases. We can, and we do, look to fulfilled prophecy as a bulwark of our faith. After the prophet had said, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a child," ages rolled on; and while it was still future, we know not how much, or by how many, it was understood: but we know, that when "the fulness of the time was come," and the prediction was accomplished, the church of God was not suffered to remain in darkness---she was not left to wander up and down, asking "Is this He that should come, or look we for another?" No---from the day of Simeon to this hour, her joyful acclamation hath been, "Unto

^m No. VII. p. 120.

us a child is born, unto us a son is given"---her steady eye has never turned from the bright star of hope and promise that first led her to Bethlehem---her unwavering faith has been, that he was despised and rejected of men, and that they hid as it were their faces from him; her well authenticated records attest, as matters of history, how all they that saw him laughed him to scorn---that they pierced his hands and his feet---that they parted his garments among them, and on his vesture they cast lots---that they gave him vinegar to drink. His disciples know well, when, and how, he was numbered with transgressors, and how his grave was made with the wicked and with the rich in his death.

But there is no need to argue this matter---we point the infidel to the captive Jew, and the wandering Arab; but who challenges him with the slain witnesses? We set before him the predicted triumphs of Cyrus; but do we expect his conversion from the French Revolution and the conquests of Napoleon? We send him to muse on the ruined city of David, and to search for the desolate scite of Babylon; but who builds his argument on the opened seals of the Apocalypse? And why is this? I do not speak hastily, and I would not speak uncharitably---but I cannot suppress my conviction, that it is because the necessity of filling up a period of 1260 years, has led to such forced interpretation

of language, and to such a constrained acquiescence in what is unsatisfactory to sound judgment, that we should be afraid not only of incurring his ridicule, but of his claiming the same licence, which we have ourselves been obliged to assume. I firmly believe that the error lies, in adopting an interpretation, which requires us to spread the events predicted respecting three years and a half, over more than twelve centuries ; and which thus sends us to search the page of history for the accomplishment of prophecies still unfulfilled. The importance of rectifying such an error, if it exists, will be admitted by all ; and the question of its existence, is that which I wish to see investigated. I therefore beg the reader, whom I would willingly suppose to prefer truth to system, to examine the prophecies in question ; endeavouring, for the time, to forget whatever he may know of the various interpretations which have been offered : and may He, who is the Author and Giver of every good and perfect gift, grant to him, and to myself, by his grace and his Spirit, a right judgment to understand, and a true faith to believe, whatever he has seen fit to reveal in his most holy word !



